CHAUCER
PARDONER'S TALE

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EXLVII

MAIDSTONE JUNIOR SCHOOL FOR GIRLS
3

CHAUCER: CANTERBURY TALES
THE PARDONER'S TALE

Selected English Classics

WITH NOTES AND INTRODUCTION.

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THE JUNIOR SHAKESPEARE.

AS YOU LIKE IT. MACBETH. MERCHANT OF VENICE. MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING. THE TEMPEST.

CHAUCER
THE PARDONER'S TALE

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INTRODUCTION.

1. Chaucer's Life and Works.

THE surname *Chaucer* is found in the earlier forms *Le Chaucier*, *Le Chaucer*, "The hosier," from the same root as modern Fr. *chausse*; or possibly it is the same name as *Le Chaufecire*, the latter being Anglo-Norman for the hybrid "chaffwax" or "chafewax" (see the *New English Dictionary*, *s.v.*).

A.D.

1337. Hundred Years' War began.

1338. John Chaucer, citizen and vintner of London, attended the king and queen to Flanders and Cologne.

1339 (about). Geoffrey Chaucer, son of John and Agnes Chaucer, born. The old date for Chaucer's birth, 1328, has been proved to be impossible, but the exact year cannot be fixed: 1339 suits all the circumstances as well as any. See 1386.

1346. Battle of Crecy.

1347. Siege of Calais.

1349. The Black Death.

1356. Battle of Poitiers.

1357. Chaucer in the service of Lionel, Duke of Clarence, and of his wife the Countess of Ulster, both in London and Yorkshire. Geoffrey was certainly well educated, but the statement that he was at Cambridge rested on the lines from *The Court of Love*, now known not to be his:—

> "Philogenet I cald am fer and nere,
> Of Cambridge clerke."

1359. Chaucer went to France as a soldier with Edward III. and his four sons, and was taken prisoner.

1360. Ransomed two months before the Treaty of Bretigny,[1] the king contributing £16 towards his ransom.

[1] By this treaty England retained: (*a*) Poitou, Saintonge, Limousin, Guienne, Gascony, *i.e.* the dominions of Eleanor of Guienne, who had married Henry II.; (*b*) the dowry of Isabella, wife of Edward II.; (*c*) the districts of Calais and Guisnes.

1362. Pleadings in the law courts ordered to be made in English, although still recorded in French until 1730.

1366. Philippa Chaucer received an annual pension of ten marks from the queen, perhaps on the occasion of her marriage: at least we assume that this was Chaucer's wife. Two things are probable: (1) that the Thomas Chaucer who, after an interval of some sixteen years, succeeded Geoffrey as forester of North Petherton Park, was their son; (2) that Philippa Chaucer's maiden name was Roet, and that she was the sister of Catherine de Roet of Hainault, better known as Catherine Swynford, the third wife of John of Gaunt. Both these probabilities are confirmed by the fact that Thomas Chaucer's arms bore three *wheels* (*roet* = "little wheel"). Further, John of Gaunt's patronage of Chaucer is partly accounted for.

1367. The king granted a pension of twenty marks to "valettus noster" Geoffrey Chaucer.

1368. In an undated list (but probably of this year) of names of those employed in the royal household, Chaucer's name occurs seventeenth of the thirty-seven esquires.

1369. Chaucer, "a squire of less estate," took part in the French campaign. Charles V. of France began to regain the territory of Aquitaine. *Book of the Duchess* (Blanche, first wife of John of Gaunt).

For the next ten years Chaucer was frequently abroad on diplomatic and commercial missions.

1370. Abroad on the king's service, it is not known where.

1372. John of Gaunt granted Philippa Chaucer a yearly pension of £10.

1373. Chaucer and two others went to Genoa to settle a commercial treaty; he was back by April 28, having also visited Florence. Probably, too, he met Petrarch at Padua, and learnt from him *The Story of Grisilde*, which he afterwards made *The Clerk's Tale*.

1374. The king granted "dilecto Armigero nostro, Galfrido

Chaucer," a pitcher of wine daily—a gift which the poet exchanged four years afterwards for twenty marks yearly. The corporation of London granted Chaucer a lease for life of the dwelling-house over the city-gate of Aldgate, and he resided there until 1385 or 1386. He was appointed Comptroller of the Customs of wool, etc., in the Port of London, "to write the rolls with his own hand, to be continually present," etc. John of Gaunt granted him £10 a year for life, "for the good service he and his wife Philippa" had rendered to the duke, to his consort, and to the duke's mother, the queen. Loss of all France except Calais, Bayonne, and Bordeaux. Cf. *Prologue*, 397 :—

> "Ful many a draughte of wyn hadde he i-drawe
> Fro Burdeuxward."

1376. Chaucer employed on some secret service with Sir J. Burley. John of Gaunt at the head of the administration, till the Good Parliament impeached Latimer and Neville, Alice Perrers, etc. But the Black Prince died, and John of Gaunt returned to power.

1377. Chaucer went on a secret mission to Flanders with Sir T. Percy (afterwards Earl of Worcester). Later, he was engaged in a mission to France for negotiating a peace: although Chaucer's name is not in the commission, he must have belonged to it, for he is mentioned by both Froissart and Stow, and received letters of protection and payment for his services. On May 31st Chaucer received payment of an annuity of twenty marks granted to him that day, and of an annuity for life of ten marks for Philippa Chaucer. Wyclif cited to appear at St. Paul's.

1378. Chaucer went with others to France to negotiate a marriage between Richard II. and a daughter of the French king. Later in the year, he paid his second visit to Italy, going to Lombardy with Sir E. Berkeley, to treat with Barnabo Visconti, Duke of Milan (see *The Monk's Tale*, B. 3589-96).

Chaucer named John Gower one of his two attorneys, or representatives, during his absence.

1379. *About this time terminated the first period of Chaucer's authorship, commonly called his French period, in which he was chiefly a "graunt translateur." In it only two works can be dated with any certainty; see* 1369 *and* 1373. *To it belong also a number of lost works, as well as the following: "The Romaunt of the Rose" (ll.* 1—1705 *of extant version almost certainly Chaucer's, but no more); "A B C"; "Life of Saint Cecyle" ("Second Nun's Tale"); "Complaint to Pity"; "Story of Constance" ("Man of Law's Tale"); "Twelve Tragedies" (in "The Monk's Tale"); "Complaint of Mars."*

1380. Cecilia Chaumpaigne released Chaucer from all claims "de raptu meo"—an unexplained matter.

1381. Rising of the people under Wat Tyler and Jack Straw. Cf. *Nun's Priest's Tale*, B. 4584:—

> "Certes he, Iakke Straw, and his meynee
> Ne made never shoutes half so shrille,
> Whan that they wolden any Fleming kille."

John of Gaunt's influence still felt.

1382. Chaucer appointed Comptroller of Petty Customs in the Port of London, with leave to discharge his duties by deputy. *Parliament of Fowls.*

1384. *House of Fame* (*certainly written about this time*).

1385. English taught in schools (Trevisa). Chaucer allowed, very likely through the queen's intercession, to appoint a permanent deputy as Comptroller of the Customs of wool. It fits in well with the circumstances to suppose that Chaucer took advantage of his liberty to make a pilgrimage to Canterbury this year, and that he was thinking of this pilgrimage when, shortly afterwards, he planned *The Canterbury Tales. Legend of Good Women.*

With this year Chaucer's second, or Italian, period of authorship may be said to close. Besides the poems named in 1382, 1384, *and* 1385, *it contained the following works, which it is not possible to date exactly;*

"*Complaint to his Lady*"; "*Anelida and Arcyte*", "*Translation of Boetius*"; "*Troilus and Cressida*"; "*To Adam the Scrivener*"; "*To Rosamond.*"

1386. Chaucer elected a knight of the shire for Kent. Possibly he had already gone to live at Greenwich (see *Envoy to Scogan*, 45), a most favourable spot for watching the pilgrims to Canterbury. At the end of this year he was deprived of his comptrollerships. John of Gaunt had gone abroad in May, and the Duke of Gloucester had seized the supreme power. In November, Richard, aged twenty, was forced to appoint a commission to inquire into abuses; there was great dissatisfaction with the Customs department, and Chaucer, amongst others, was deprived, and left with his pensions alone.

In the same year, in the trial of Scrope *v.* Grosvenor, in which Chaucer was a witness, he is described as "del age de xl ans et plus, armeez par xxvii ans" (of the age of *forty and upwards*, *armed for twenty-seven years*). This statement, though vague, seems to imply that Chaucer was not yet fifty. The supposition that he was forty-seven (adopted throughout this table) would make him eighteen in 1357, when he was in the Countess of Ulster's service, and twenty in 1359, when he first bore arms—conclusions that cannot well miss the mark by more than a year or so.

1387. Chaucer's wife died, as her pension was regularly paid up to June and there is no further trace of her.

1388. Chaucer seems to have been in distress at this time, for he sold his two pensions of twenty marks each. There can be little doubt that he used his enforced leisure of the last two years in writing the greater part of *The Canterbury Tales.*

1389. While John of Gaunt was away in Spain (cf. *Monk's Tale*, B. 3560-80), Richard took the government into his own hands, and ruled fairly well for eight years. Chaucer, in consequence, received the appointment of Clerk of the King's Works, and was allowed to perform his duties by deputy

1390. In the above capacity Chaucer was ordered to have St. George's Chapel, Windsor, repaired. He was robbed of the king's money twice in the same day by the same gang of robbers. About this time he was made forester of North Petherton Park, in Somerset, by Duke Lionel's grandson, the Earl of March (see 1366).

1391. Chaucer lost his appointment as Clerk of the Works, but the reason is unknown. Henceforward until the accession of Henry IV. he seems to have been in pecuniary difficulties. *Treatise on the Astrolabe.*

1393. *Envoy to Scogan.*

1394. Richard II. granted Chaucer £20 a year for life.

1395. Among other loans, Chaucer on one occasion borrowed as small a sum as £1 6*s.* 8*d.*, whence it is inferred that he was in dire pecuniary embarrassment.

1396. Richard II. married Isabella of France; truce made with France for twenty-five years. *Envoy to Bukton.*

1397. Richard attacked the Lords Appellant in Parliament; put one, Arundel, to death; banished and imprisoned others.

1398. Chaucer applied to the Exchequer in person, on two separate occasions, for an advance of 6*s.* 8*d.* In response to a petition to the king he was granted a tun of wine annually for life. The Parliament of Shrewsbury deferred abjectly to the king, who became virtually absolute and ruled arbitrarily. Hereford banished.

1399. John of Gaunt died, and Richard seized his estates. Richard went to Ireland, and Hereford, now Duke of Lancaster, landed at Ravenspur, and was joined by the Percies and by the regent, the Duke of York. Richard returned, surrendered, was imprisoned, and resigned the crown. Parliament met, accepted the resignation, and, after hearing the articles of accusation, deposed Richard on September 30th. *Complaint to his Purse*, with an *Envoy* addressed to the new king. On October 3rd, four days after Henry's accession, he granted

Chaucer forty marks a year, in addition to his pension of £20. Chaucer took the lease of a house near the present site of Henry VII.'s Chapel, Westminster, for a term of fifty-three years *i.e.* for life.

1400. In February Chaucer received one of his pensions; in June some one received a payment for him, and this is the last notice we have. The stone in Westminster Abbey, which dates from 1556 but was possibly copied from an earlier stone, states that he died October 25th, 1400.

1401. Act "de heretico comburendo," and first execution for Lollard heresy.

From 1386 *to his death is Chaucer's great period of original work* (*for there is no need to make a fourth period—of decline*), *which contains, besides "The Canterbury Tales" and other works already named, the following minor poems: "The Former Age"; "Fortune"; "Truth"; "Gentleness"; "Lack of Steadfastness"; "Complaint of Venus."*

Among spurious Chaucer poems (*which are to be judged chiefly by the tests of metre and language*) *may be named: "The Complaint of the Black Knight," now attributed to Lydgate on Shirley's authority; "The Cuckoo and the Nightingale," the first two lines of which are quoted from "The Knight's Tale"* (*A.* 1785-6); *"The Court of Love," hardly earlier than* 1500; *"Chaucer's Dream"* (*not "The Book of the Duchess"*), *or "The Isle of Ladies," of the sixteenth century; and "The Flower and the Leaf," professing to be the work of a woman, and belonging to the fifteenth century.*

The chief autobiographical passages in Chaucer's works are: (a) *The description of his person in the Prologue to "Sir Thopas,"* *B.* 1883-94; (b) *the description of his habits, etc., in "The House of Fame,"* 574—660, (c) *and in the Prologue to "The Legend of Good Women,"* 29—39; *and lists of his works in* (d) *the Prologue to "The Legend,"* 417-41 (405-31 *A. text*); (e) *"The Man of Law's Head-link,"* *B.* 47—89; *and* (f) *in the "Preces de Chaucer" at the close of "The Parson's Tale,"* *I.* 1085-7. *His Christian name Geoffrey occurs in*

"*The House of Fame*," 729, *and his surname in* "*The Canterbury Tales*," *B.* 47.

From the foregoing table may be compiled lists of Chaucer's pensions, of the appointments he held, and of the various missions in which he took part. And from the other "bones," which are somewhat less "dry," it will be well to extract a connected life of the poet, which will not be without important bearing on the study of his poetry.

2. "The Canterbury Tales."

It may be conceded that the idea of a collection of tales *may* have been suggested to Chaucer by Boccaccio's *Decamerone* (although it has been argued, on the other hand, that he was not familiar with that work, since he borrows no tales directly from it, and even that he did not know Boccaccio's name, which he never mentions—but this seems too absurd), and that he *may* have been urged on to the work by Gower's success with what has been called "the first great collection of tales in the English language," the *Confessio Amantis*. The bare idea of a collection was not new, and therefore was probably not original. But it must be pointed out that Chaucer's plan for a collection of tales had advantages possessed by no possible model. All Gower's stories are told by one person; Boccaccio's refugees from the plague are all of the same age, and belong to the same social caste. Chaucer alone had the happy and brilliant thought of bringing his story-tellers together for a common purpose of such a nature that it united "all sorts and conditions of men" and women in unstrained and unrestrained intercourse. And what suggested the idea of a pilgrimage to Chaucer? It has been supposed that the suggestion came to him from Langland's *Piers Plowman* and his pilgrimage to Truth. But is it not conceivable that to a man of Chaucer's genius, living in an age of pilgrimages, possibly (as we have seen) seeing pilgrims to Canterbury pass his own house almost every week in the year, probably (as we have also seen) taking part in one himself, the idea *might* occur without any suggestion from a literary predecessor?

If Chaucer himself made a pilgrimage to Canterbury, it was most likely in 1385. He had just been permitted to appoint a deputy to his Comptrollership of the Customs of wool, and would be in the very mood for what he no doubt regarded chiefly as a holiday jaunt. Skeat prefers the date 1387, on the ground that 1385 is too early a date for the composition of *The Canterbury Tales*. This is undoubted, and is also beside the mark. For the question is, not in what year Chaucer wrote *The Canterbury Tales*, but *in what year he conceived of the pilgrimage as taking place*, and it can hardly be doubted that that was the year in which he went on pilgrimage himself—that is to say, that he had the details of his own pilgrimage in mind when he planned his series of tales. It will presently be seen, from internal evidence, that Chaucer's pilgrims assemble at the Tabard Inn in Southwark on April 16th, start on the morning of the 17th, and reach Canterbury on the 20th. In 1385, April 16th was a Sunday, and April 20th a Thursday. In 1387, April 16th was a Tuesday, and April 20th a Saturday. Both these years therefore are free from objection as regards the days of the week—a consideration which is fatal to the years 1386 (when, *e.g.*, April 20th was Good Friday), 1388, 1389, and 1390. Nothing could be more likely than that the pilgrims should assemble on Sunday evening, ready to make an early start on Monday, as would have happened in 1385. The only objection to this year, and that perhaps a fatal one, is that Chaucer received his pensions as usual on April 24th, which barely leaves him time to get back from Canterbury.

In whatever year, Chaucer assembled his pilgrims at the Tabard Inn on April 16th. It is needless to tell in detail here what the student will read for himself in *The Prologue*, —how Harry Bailly or Bailey, the host of the Tabard, proposed that each pilgrim should tell two tales on the way to Canterbury and two more on the way home; that he himself should accompany them at his own expense, and act as guide and judge; and that the teller of the best tale should in the end be feasted (of course at the Tabard) at the expense of the rest,—all of which was unanimously adopted by the company. The number of pilgrims was

"wel nyne-and-twenty" (exactly 29), including Chaucer but excluding the Host. If we add him as well as the Canon's Yeoman, who joined the company on the road and told a tale, we get a total of thirty-one, as follows:— 1. The Knight; 2. The Squire; 3. The Yeoman; 4. The Prioress; 5. The Second Nun; 6. The Nun's Priest (but see note on *Prol.*, 164); 7. The Monk; 8. The Friar; 9. The Merchant; 10. The Clerk; 11. The Sergeant-at-Law; 12. The Franklin; 13. The Haberdasher; 14. The Carpenter; 15. The Weaver; 16. The Dyer; 17. The "Tapycer"; 18. The Cook; 19. The Shipman; 20. The Doctor of Medicine; 21. The Wife of Bath; 22. The Parson; 23. The Ploughman; 24. The Miller; 25. The Manciple; 26. The Reeve; 27. The Summoner; 28. The Pardoner; 29. Chaucer; 30. Harry Bailly; 31. The Canon's Yeoman: "ther were namo." The full original scheme therefore, as given in *The Prologue*, included about a hundred and twenty tales. But in *The Franklin's Headlink* (F. 673—708)—and the fact has hardly received the attention it deserves—Chaucer seems to be already aware that some modification of his original plan may be necessary, for he makes the Host say (F. 696-8):—

> "What, frankeleyn? pardee, sir, wel thou wost
> That eche of yow mot tellen atte leste
> *A tale or two*, or breken his biheste."

And lines 16—19 and 25 of *The Parson's Prologue* (the Host is speaking)—

> "Now lakketh us no tales mo than oon.
> Fulfild is my sentence and my decree;
> I trowe that we han herd of ech degree.
> Almost fulfild is al myn ordinaunce, . . .
> For every man save thou hath toold his tale"—

show clearly that Chaucer had by this time modified his plan at least to the telling of *one* tale only by each pilgrim on each journey, and even this "tale" of tales is incomplete for the outward journey, and he does not even make his pilgrims reach Canterbury.

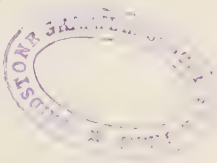
We have in all twenty-four tales or fragments of tales to divide among thirty-three pilgrims, of whom, however, the Host was not planned as a tale-teller. Of the remaining

thirty-two, nine are altogether silent, and Chaucer himself makes two attempts, so that the numbers tally. Chaucer is unpardonably interrupted (although the interruption is in excellent taste from the poet's own point of view) by the Host in his first attempt, *The Rime of Sir Thopas*, and substitutes the wearisome prose tale of *Melibeus*. Though we cannot but regard *Sir Thopas* as a burlesque of the romances of his day, neither can we help wishing that none of Chaucer's poetical work were inferior to it. One other tale, the Parson's, is in prose. Besides the truncated *Sir Thopas*, *The Squire's Tale* is "left half told," and the Cook's is a mere fragment. The nine silent members of the company were the Knight's Yeoman, the Ploughman, two of the "priests three" (the one who tells a tale is called the Nun's Priest), and the five burgesses—the haberdasher, the carpenter, the weaver, the dyer, and the tapestry-maker.

GROUPS OF TALES: NOTES OF TIME AND PLACE.—*The Canterbury Tales* have come down to us as a series of fragments, or groups of tales, with some connecting links. The order of the tales varies considerably in different manuscripts, and it took much patience and careful investigation, on the part of Dr. Furnivall and the late Mr. Bradshaw, to ascertain by means of the links what tales composed the various groups, and the right order of the groups themselves. In the end the following result has been arrived at, the indications of time and locality being added in their place:—

April 17. GROUP A.*

General Prologue.
Knight's Tale.
Miller's Prologue and Tale.
Reeve's Prologue and Tale.



"LO, *Depeford* [Deptford], and it is *half wey prime* [= 7.30 a.m.].
Lo, *Grenewych* [Greenwich], ther many a shrewe is inne."
A. 3906-7.

Cook's Prologue and Tale.

* These groups are now all but universally adopted, and thus reference to any passage is facilitated, because the groups and lines do not vary in different editions.

April 18. GROUP B.

Man of Law's Head-link, Prologue, and Tale.

"Oure Hoste saugh wel that the brighte sonne
The ark of his artificial day hath ronne
The ferthe part, and half an houre and moore [= 10 a.m.],
And though he were nat depe experte in loore,
He wiste it was *the eightetethe day* [= 18th April]
Of Aprill that is messager to May."—B. 1—6.

Shipman's Prologue and Tale.
Prioress's Prologue and Tale.
Prologue to, and Tale of, Sir Thopas.
Prologue to, and Tale of, Melibeus.
Monk's Prologue and Tale.

'Loo, *Rouchestre* [Rochester] stant heer faste by!"—B. 3116.

Nun's Priest's Prologue, Tale, and Epilogue.

April 19. GROUP C.*

Doctor's Tale, and Words of the Host.
Pardoner's Prologue and Tale.

GROUP D.

Wife of Bath's Prologue and Tale.

"Er I come to *Sidyngborne* [Sittingbourne]."—D. 847.

Friar's Prologue and Tale.
Summoner's Prologue and Tale.

"My tale is doon; we been almoost at *towne* [Sittingbourne]."
D. 2294.

GROUP E.

Clerk's Prologue and Tale.
Merchant's Prologue, Tale, and Epilogue.

[There are no notes of time or place in this group, but there are two or three allusions to *The Wife of Bath's Prologue*, showing that this group follows Group D. See E. 1170, 1685, 2438.]

April 20. GROUP F.

Squire's Prologue and Tale.

"I wol nat taryen yow, *for it is pryme* [= 9 a.m.]."—F. 73.

Franklin's Head-link, Prologue, and Tale.

* As this group contains no notes of time or place, its position cannot be assigned with certainty. Nothing was gained by removing it from its place in the Ellesmere manuscript between F. and G.

GROUP G.

Second Nun's Prologue and Tale.
Canon's Yeoman's Prologue and Tale.

"Whan toold was al the lyf of Seinte Cecile,
Er we hadde riden fully fyve mile,
At Boghton-under-Blee."—G. 554-6.

"Sires, now *in the morwe tyde,*
Out of youre hostelrie I saugh you ryde."—G. 598-9.

[The Canon's Yeoman, overtaking the pilgrims at Boughton-under-Blean, five miles from the place where they had passed the night, says he had seen them ride out of their hostelry that morning.]

GROUP H.

Manciple's Prologue and Tale.

"Woot ye nat where ther stant a litel toun,
Which that y-cleped is *Bobbe-up-and-doun,*
Under the Blee [Blean Forest] *in Caunterbury weye?*
Ther gan oure Hooste for to jape and pleye."—H. 1—4.

"What eyleth thee to slepe by *the morwe* [morning]?"—H. 16.

GROUP I.

Parson's Prologue and Tale.

"*Foure of the clokke* it was tho, as I gesse." [4 p.m.] I. 5.

Allowing for minor inconsistencies, such as are to be expected in a work that has come down to us in this fragmentary condition, the above internal allusions to time and localities are best explained on the very supposition that is supported by the available external evidence,—viz., that the journey from Southwark to Canterbury extended over four days; that the pilgrims halted for the night at Dartford, Rochester, and Ospringe; and that they had a midday meal at Sittingbourne on the third day. This is exactly what Queen Isabella did in 1358, and King John of France in 1360.

It would be possible to divide *The Canterbury Tales* into three classes: (*a*) old poems of Chaucer's inserted in the collection without alteration; (*b*) old poems rewritten, in part or in whole; (*c*) new tales written expressly for the collection, this last being the most numerous class. The early *Life of Saint Cecile* became *The Second Nun's Tale;*

The Story of Grisilde, with the addition of two stanzas (E. 995—1008) and the Envoy, became the famous *Clerk's Tale; The Story of Constance* became *The Man of Law's Tale;* and *The Twelve Tragedies* formed the bulk of *The Monk's Tale*, of which the Knight "stinted" him. These four tales are in stanzas, and no other tales are in stanzas except *Sir Thopas* and the Prioress's. Professor Skeat therefore proposed a metrical canon for deciding which tales are early and which late. There is good reason for believing that decasyllabic rhyming couplets were first used in England in Chaucer's *Legend of Good Women*, which dates from about 1385. Skeat's canon, therefore, is this: "All of *The Canterbury Tales* written in this metre were written after 1385, whilst those not in this metre *may* have been earlier, though one of them and a part of some others appear to be later." Part of *The Monk's Tale*, although in stanzas must be later than 1385, because it celebrates the death of Barnabo Visconti, who died in that year. There is also no reason to doubt that *Sir Thopas* and *The Prioress's Tale*, both in stanzas, were written for their places in *The Canterbury Tales*, and therefore after 1385. Two tales are in prose. The remaining sixteen are in rhymed couplets. One of these, *The Pardoner's Tale*, will demand separate consideration.

3. Pardoners and Chaucer's Pardoner.

To understand aright the *Pardoner's Tale* we must first have a clear and exact notion of the teaching and practice of the Medieval Church with regard to Pardons. A Pardon was what is now generally called an Indulgence, the term Pardon being to-day often restricted to such pious exercises and pilgrimages as those in Brittany, lasting from May to October and culminating in July, by which Indulgences may be gained. A holiday in Brittany in July or August would create in the mind of the sympathetic student the right medieval atmosphere, so necessary for the appreciation of the Canterbury Tales, our most life-like record of the Middle Ages.

The definition of an Indulgence given in Webster's Dictionary may be quoted, as being exact enough for our purpose: "Remission of the temporal punishment due to sins, after the guilt of sin has been remitted by sincere repentance; absolution from the censures and public penances of the Church. It is a payment of the debt of justice to God by the application of the merits of Christ and His saints to the contrite soul through the Church. It is therefore believed to diminish or destroy the punishment of purgatory for sins."

A Pardon then was a commutation of temporal punishment here or in purgatory after the sinner had been forgiven the sin. This commutation took several forms. It might take the form of prayer (such as frequent recitation of the Penitential Psalms), of fasting, or of alms-deeds. The men who quested for these alms were called officially questors or *quaestiarii*, popularly pardoners. The genuineness of their mission was attested by a patent from the Pope which bore the papal seal, and by a licence from the local bishop authorising them to beg in his diocese:—

> "And thanne my bulles shewe I alle and some;
> Our lige lordes seel on my patente
> That shewe I first, my body to warente."

The success of the true pardoner tempted many bogus ones. Relics can easily be forged, even more easily than patents or seals, while the latter could be counterfeited with greater success before the days of the electric telegraph than to-day.

Pope Boniface IX. wrote of these impostors in a Bull issued 1390, about the date of *The Canterbury Tales*: "It has been brought to our ears with the greatest displeasure . . . that certain religious, who even belong to different mendicant orders, and some secular clerks . . . affirming that they are sent by us or by the legates and nuncios of the Apostolic See . . . are going hither and thither and showing to the faithful and simple people true or false faculties . . . and impudently displaying their own seals for the purpose of gaining wickedly illicit alms. For the smallest sum of money they are casting a veil of lying absolution not over

the penitent but over those who with bad consciences are continuing in their iniquity; they are absolving from atrocious offences, without true contrition or due precedent form—to use their own words." Boniface desired an enquiry and imprisonment for the guilty.

A quarter of a century later the University of Oxford in recommending a reformation of abuses in the Church asked that the "pestiferous sect of pardoners be blotted out from the limits of the Church: simonists who sell indulgences and squander their gains with the Prodigal Son, and what is worse, preach, although not in holy orders, and pretend to have plenary power of absolving, *a poena et a culpa*, the living and dead."[1]

From this and from much more contemporary evidence we can see that Chaucer's account of the Pardoner is not a caricature, but a genuine portrait of a well-known ecclesiastical type of the day. It is necessary to insist upon this, otherwise a modern reader would miss in the account of the Pardoner that sense of reality so characteristic of all the descriptions of the Canterbury pilgrims.

Although all the best minds in the Church had long been conscious of the iniquities that were resulting from the simony of the Pardoners, the abolition of these functionaries did not take place until the Council of Trent in 1562, after the great religious upheaval caused by the Reformation.

In the 9th chapter of the Decree of Reform of this Council it is stated that, having in vain tried to mend Pardoners at previous Councils, it is now resolved to end them. And that the faithful might not be deprived of Indulgences permission to publish them at due times was granted to the ordinaries. Alms in future were not to be made a subject of private gain.

Having seen what a Pardon is and what Pardoners were, we proceed to consider the character of the narrator of the *Pardoner's Tale*.

His appearance was by no means in his favour. In the Prologue we read that his long yellow hair hung in

[1] Wilkins' *Concilia*, iii. 365.

bunches on his shoulders. Being a plutocrat and gaining more money in a day than the parson made in two months, he aimed at the newest fashion, which was to wear no hood, and thus he was able to display his yellow locks to the best advantage. His voice, except when he preached (line 330), was as thin as a goat's, but unlike that animal he could not manage to grow a beard. The relics that he carried to excite the devotion of the people were as genuine as the man himself.

We have two different lists of these relics, one in the General Prologue and the other in the Prologue to the *Pardoner's Tale*. The first mentions a pillow-case which its owner said was "Our Lady's veil," a fragment of the sail of St. Peter's boat, and a glass full of pigs' bones. In the second we hear of

> "longe cristal stones
> Y-crammed full of cloutes and of bones,"

and in addition the shoulder-bone of a holy Jew's sheep set in "latoun," along with a mitten that possessed marvellous properties.

From what the Pardoner says about his "brethren" (line 416), he was probably a member of some confraternity like the Questors for the Hospital of St. John of Jerusalem in England, whom Pope Urban V. denounced by Bull in A.D. 1369. Further, he was probably not in major orders, for in the Prologue of the *Wife of Bath's Tale* we find him telling that worthy woman that he had had thoughts of matrimony, but that her discourse on marriage had made him change his mind.

In church he was a "noble ecclesiastic," and excelled in singing the offertory,

> "For wel he wiste whan that song was songe,
> He moste preche and wel affile his tonge."

He made up for his practice by his preaching, for, as he admits himself, and as we may judge from the excellent sample he gives us, he was an able preacher, whose sermons were well calculated to make

> "oother folk to twynne
> From avarice and soore to repente."

Chaucer by one of the artistic touches of his genius shows us that even in the greatest villain there is an element of good, and that there is some hope for this poor degraded Pardoner, when he makes him say (and we may believe from the bottom of his heart) :—

> " And Jhesu Crist that is oure soules leche,
> So grante yow his pardoun to receyve ;
> *For that is best.*"

Even Browning in his " Bishop Blougram's Apology " could not improve upon the artistry of this little piece of psychology.

It is interesting to note a contemporary reference to Pardoners in the *Vision of Piers the Plowman*, B. text, Prol., 68 fol. :—

> " There preched a pardonere, as he a prest were ;
> Broughte forth a bulle with bishopes seles,
> And seide that hymself myghte assoilen hem alle,
> Of falshed, of fastyng, of vowes y-broken.
> Lewed men leved hym wel and lyked his wordes,
> Comen up knelyng to kissen his bulles ;
> He bonched hem with his brevet and blered here eyes,
> And raughte with his ragman rynges and broches ;
> Thus they geven here golde glotones to kepe."

With this compare Chaucer's *Pardoner's Prologue and Tale*, lines 335 fol., 907 fol.

One great difference between Chaucer's account and Langland's is that in the latter we are expressly told that the parish priest and the pardoner divided the silver between them.

Other well-known references to Pardoners in literature may be found in Boccaccio's *Decamerone* (Sixth Day, Tale 10) ; Rabelais' *Pantagruel* (Bk. II., Chap. xvii.) ; the old French farce *Un Pardonneur, un Triacleur et une Taverniere* ; Sir David Lindsay's *Satire of the Three Estates* ; John Heywood's *Merry Play between the Pardoner and the Frere, etc.*, and his *Four P's*. Heywood, however, borrows direct from Chaucer.

4. The Pardoner's Prologue and Tale and their Analogues.

In drawing the character of the Pardoner Chaucer had not to go very far afield, for, as we have seen, he would in Medieval England have had plenty of opportunity for drawing him from the life. What astonishes us, however, at first sight in the character-drawing is the complacent frankness of the rascal.

The Pardoner on this occasion, at all events, does not add hypocrisy to his other vices. He freely admits that he is a liar and a calumniator, in fact, as he cheerfully says, "a full vicious man"; and yet not only is he tolerated by the company, including the "verray parfit gentil knight," who even insists that the Pardoner and the Host should embrace and make friends, but he appears to expect after all his revelations to obtain nobles and pence in return for permission to venerate his bogus relics and for his absolution.

The question naturally arises, Is this a possible state of things, or is it a defect in Chaucer's art?

At the present day we can hardly conceive a party consisting of our virtuous selves tolerating the company of a self-confessed criminal, as the better class Canterbury Pilgrims appear to have done; while the conduct of the knight disappoints our modern prejudices. Medieval people, however, were less squeamish than we are: pilgrims of all sorts kept together on the roads for mutual protection, as robbery with violence was by no means uncommon; every pilgrim going on a pilgrimage went as a sinner, and it would hardly have been a mark of a penitential spirit to throw a stone even at the sinner who revelled in his sin as did the Pardoner.

As to any artistic defect, one can hardly imagine Chaucer, who was an artist to his finger-tips, committing a glaring fault against art. At the time he wrote the doings of Pardoners constituted a notorious ecclesiastical scandal and the best feeling in the Church was in favour of their suppression. Chaucer, possibly to help this movement, introduces his Pardoner among his motley crowd of

pilgrims and makes him a frank bold rogue by no means ashamed of his sorry trade. The Pardoner's Prologue then seems natural enough, while the conclusion of the Pardoner's Tale is part of the consummate impudence of the man, who is really on a holiday and being full of the holiday spirit is not particularly anxious to ply his trade, but is anxious to boast of his achievements and to show what a good fellow he is on the whole.

Chaucer may have derived hints for the character of the Pardoner from his favourite Jean de Meung's Fals Semblant (in the *Roman de la Rose*), who admits to Love (6482) that he is a hypocrite, and also preaches a moral sermon directed against the mendicant orders. In the *Pardoner's Tale*, as well as in the *Prologue* to the *C.T.*, we have apparently frequent reminiscences of Fals Semblant; cp. *e.g. Rom. de la Rose* (English version) lines 6787 fol.:—

> "And wolde ich reneyed begging
> And lyved by my traveyling
> If I ne had rent ne other goode.
> What! Wened he that I were woode?
> For labour myght me never plese,
> I have more wille to bene at ese,
> And have wel lever, soth to sey,
> Bifore the puple patre and prey
> And wrie me in my foxerie
> Under a cope of papelardie."

and lines 6832 fol.:—

> "I wole no lyf but ese and pees,
> And wynne gold to spende also.
> For whanne the grete bagge is go,
> It cometh right with my japes.
> Make I not wel tumble myn apes?
> To wynnen is alwey myn entent,
> My purchace is bettir than my rent.
> . . . . . .
> With hondis wille I not travailen,
> For of the Pope I have the bull."

In lines 6928 fol. Fals Semblant shows, as does the Pardoner, how dangerous it is to attack his order:—

> "Hym that oon hatith hate we alle,
> And congecte how to done hym falle."

Miss Kate Petersen, in her monograph *On the Sources of The Nonne Prestes Tale*, writes that the *Pardoner's Tale* shows evidence of a knowledge of a collection of moral stories for the use of preachers compiled by Thomas of Cantimpré, a Belgian Dominican, born about 1210. This collection contains a tale which resembles the beginning of the *Pardoner's Tale*, while the scene is laid in Brabant—*in Brabantiae partibus*; cp. line 463, "In Flaundres whilom was a compaignye." The tale, too, concerns

"A compaignye
Of yonge folk that haunteden folye,"

who are led by admonition to perceive that by their terrible blasphemies

"Oure blissed Lordes body they to-tere."

Two other stories from the same collection are cited by Miss Petersen. In the first "Flanders itself is mentioned, and the 'tombesteres' and the wicked revelry. The rest of the story treats of an impious man suddenly stricken down for his impiety"; cp. *Pardoner's Tale*, lines 673 fol. The second story introduces a mysterious personage who presents himself before the revellers, but in this case turns out to be the devil.

Another sermon-book apparently used by Chaucer was that of Robert Holkot (†1349), an Oxford Dominican. The allusions to Holy Scripture (483, 549, 584, 743) and to Seneca (492) are all paralleled by Miss Petersen from Holkot, where the same references are found.

On the sermon form these remarks of the same authority are worth notice:—

"The *Nun's Priest's Tale* and the *Pardoner's Tale* are worth comparing with regard to the way in which the sermon effect in each is produced. The 'machine-preaching' is rather more in evidence in the *Pardoner's Tale* than in the *Tale of the Nun's Priest*,—possibly because the former is meant to exemplify that revelation of his method which the Pardoner has made in his prologue. In the prologue the Pardoner says that his text

'Is alway oon and ever was:
Radix malorum est cupiditas.'

In the tale, however, like the *Nun's Priest*, he varies his text as the theme of the narrative affords an opportunity. He pauses in the course of the tale to denounce drunkenness and gluttony, 'hasardrye' and swearing."

No immediate source has as yet been discovered for the tale that the Pardoner tells, although the tale itself is a very old one and appears to have been brought to Europe from the East. In the collection of Buddhist Birth-stories called the *Jataka*, in which the Buddha relates what had happened in the previous incarnations of himself and others, we find the *motif* of the *Pardoner's Tale*. This is in the story of Vedabbha, where Gautama (Buddha) is describing the previous life of an obstinate member of his brotherhood. The tale may be thus summarised:—

In a previous incarnation of Gautama a follower of his had been a Brahman called Vedabbha, who possessed an astrological spell of such great power that he could procure a rain of treasure from heaven. He and Gautama were captured by five hundred robbers. Against Gautama's advice he produced a rain of treasure from heaven to secure his release.

Five hundred other robbers attack the first five hundred to obtain the wealth, and make them prisoners. The captives narrate how they had obtained their wealth, and offer to hand over the Brahman, who has had no opportunity to escape, as a fitting ransom. The offer is accepted, and his new masters bid the Brahman produce a rain of treasure from heaven for them. He, it appears, can do this only once a year, when the right planetary conjunction occurs. The impatient robbers are in no mood for astronomy, slay the Brahman out of hand, and turning back assail again the former five hundred, slay them all and again become masters of the wealth.

Cupidity causes them then to divide into two bands, who fight till half are slain. This process continues until there are left only two robbers to share the magic wealth. These two hide the treasure in a thicket, one guarding it with drawn sword, while the other takes rice to the village to get it cooked. Each decides to kill the other and become sole master of the wealth. With this end in view the one

poisons his fellow's rice, but he is cut down by the other as soon as he enters the thicket. The other eats the rice and dies at once. The Buddha points the moral much as does the Pardoner. Similar legends are found in Persian and other eastern tongues, while there is one version in Burton's edition of *The Arabian Nights*.

Tyrwhitt pointed out that the outline of *The Pardoner's Tale* is to be found in the *Cento Novelle Antiche* ("Hundred Ancient Novels," an Italian collection of (?) the thirteenth to fourteenth century). In *Originals and Analogues* (Chaucer Society publications) Mr. Furnivall gives the Italian text of two such stories found in different editions of the *Cento Novelle Antiche*.

The first concerns Our Lord, who was once walking with His disciples when they saw some gold piastres. The disciples asked His permission to take them, but He refused, saying, "You desire those things that draw the greater number of souls from our Kingdom." Shortly after, two bosom friends found the gold. One slew the other to get it all for himself, but was poisoned by a loaf that the other had brought him.

The second story has closer resemblances to Chaucer's. In it there are, as in his version, three robbers, but it is a Hermit who shows them a treasure that he has seen in a cave. The Hermit is running away from the cave and tells the three robbers that Death is chasing him. They laugh at his idea that a treasure is Death, but prove the truth of it in a similar way to the rioters of Chaucer's story. One of the robbers poisons the meat and wine that he has been sent to fetch for the other two, who slay him with their knives, and are in their turn killed by the poisoned food.

This is perhaps the best story of all the Analogues, but it misses many of Chaucer's graphic touches. In the Italian story the Hermit is fleeing Death: in Chaucer we have a mysterious old man—perhaps any old man, or old age generally; possibly Death himself, who is to be the last to die—who wants to die, but cannot. Chaucer takes full advantage of so striking a theme to display wonderfully the purely poetic side of his genius (see lines 720 to 738).

Neither the Italian analogue nor Chaucer tells us where the gold originally came from, although, as we have seen, there is an explanation of the source of the treasure in the Buddhist Birth-story.

Chaucer introduces the Plague ("this pestilence") into his version in order to make his rioters start in drunken rage to slay this Death, who has slain so many. We cannot date the *Pardoner's Tale* from this, as the Plague was unfortunately a common visitant in Chaucer's day. If the Plague portion of the story is original with Chaucer, then it might be taken as an allusion to the last Great Plague (1376), the remembrance of which would be vivid for at least a generation after the event.

Chaucer finally makes the story more dramatic than it is in any of the analogues. In addition to the three rioters and the mysterious old man, the servant (670) and the apothecary (852) take part in the movement of the piece. The plausible excuse about the rats, and the "pole-cat that had slain his capons"; the borrowing of the three bottles from a man in the next street to the apothecary's, are quasi-dramatic touches which add vividness to the poet's story, and, if not original, at least testify to his powers of selection.

5. Date of the Tale.

The *Pardoner's Tale* appears to belong to the last stage of Chaucer's work, and to have been written expressly for its place in *The Canterbury Tales*. No evidence has been found on which we can assign an exact date to it, for, as we have seen in the last section, the mention of the "pestilence," even if an original addition on the part of Chaucer, gives us no help. All that we can say is that the connecting link, the Prologue, and the Tale itself show both in metre and in style the consummate ease that marks Chaucer's latest work.

In the Ellesmere MS., which is generally considered the best, the *Pardoner's Tale* is fourteenth of the twenty-four Canterbury Tales. Of the remaining ten, half probably were not written for their places in the list, so that this

circumstance would bring the *Pardoner's Tale* nearer to the latest limit that may be assigned for the Tales as a whole. Some authorities give as this limit the year 1391, when Chaucer's *Astrolabe* appeared. If this is the case, we should not be far wrong in assigning the *Pardoner's Tale* to a year or two before the writing of what was his latest work of any length, viz. the *Astrolabe*.

6. Metre.

The metre of the tale is the heroic couplet, *i.e.* iambic pentameters rhyming in couplets. One of Chaucer's great services to English poetry was the introduction of this measure, perhaps the most satisfactory verse-form for purely narrative poetry. Although instances of the heroic couplet previous to Chaucer have been found, yet he is the first in our literature to make extensive use of it. Chaucer is one of the three greatest masters of the measure in the English language. In the first half of the eighteenth century, when owing to the influence of Pope this form of verse enjoyed great vogue, no poet appeared who handled the rhyming iambic pentameter with more consummate ease and artistry than the author of the *Canterbury Tales* had done. Pope's lines have more polish and point, but they lack the vigour and virility of Chaucer's. While Pope's verse tends to become epigrammatic prose cut into machine-lengths, Chaucer avoids singsong by such artistic liberties as all great poets know how to claim, by pauses in the line, and by breaking the couplet with a pause.

He allows, as a rule, a long pause or paragraph to fall only at the end of the couplet (*e.g.* compare C. 300 with C. 351; C. 462 with C. 561). He avails himself of Auftakt, *i.e.* the use of one or more unstressed syllables before the first foot of the line; Elision; Catalexis, or omission of an unaccented syllable, especially the first; and hypermetric syllables finally or medially. He had claimed similar freedom in his treatment of the short couplet of four syllables. If we may judge from the

practice of Chaucer's contemporaries, this was a revolutionary reaction to the old freedom of English verse, Gower, for example, being as mechanical a poet as Pope.

It is noteworthy in the history of English poetry that all our greatest poets have shown their supremacy over metre by refusing to allow themselves to be shackled by arbitrary laws. The phenomenon that we see in Chaucer is repeated in the case of Spenser, Shakespeare, Milton, Dryden, Coleridge, Shelley, and Browning, and the student of English Literature would find it most instructive to work out this parallel in detail in each particular case.

For the sake of comparison it may not be unprofitable to bring together and to scan two extracts typical of the best work of two masters of the heroic couplet, Chaucer and Pope, and to show what different effects may be produced by the same metre.

The próu | deste óf | thise rí | otoúr | es thrée
Answér | de agáyn : | What, cárl | with só | ry gráce,
Why ár | tow ál | forwráp | ped, sáve | thy fáce ?
Why lý | vestów | so lónge | in só | greet áge ?
This óld | e mán | gan lóoke | in his | viságe,
And séy | de thús : | For Í | ne kán | nat fýnde
A mán, | though thát | I wálk | ed ín | to Ýnde
Néither | in cí | tee nór | in nó | villáge,
That wól | de cháunge | his yóuth | e fór | myn áge.

(CHAUCER, *Pard. Tale*, C. 716-724.)

Here we have nine free iambic pentameters producing an effect of consummate ease and grace. The caesural pause that occurs at the end of the second foot in lines 1 and 2 shifts to the middle of the fourth foot in line 3 and to the end of the third foot in lines 4 and 5. In line 4 the sentence pause breaks up the couplet and thus destroys the sing-song effect which a too regular metre must

inevitably produce. In lines 3 and 4 the voice lingers a little on the "Why," which produces a pleasing sense of metrical change, while line 8 begins with a trochaic movement, and there is an instance of hiatus in line 7; also in lines 2-9 the rhymes are feminine. As these lines have not been selected on account of the metre, but because they form part of a very beautiful passage, the freedom and ease of the artist is all the more noteworthy. Let us now examine a few lines of Pope:—

And nów | the chá | pel's síl | ver béll | you héar,
That súm | mons yóu | to áll | the príde | of práyer:
Light quírks | of mú | sic bró | ken ánd | unéven
Máke the | soul dánce | upón | a jíg | to héaven.
On paín | ted céil | ings yóu | devóut | ly stáre,
Where správl | the sáints | of Vér | rio ór | Laguérre,
On gíl | ded clóuds | in fáir | expán | sion líe,
And bríng | all pár | adíse | befóre | your éye,
To rést | the cúsh | ion ánd | soft deán | invíte,
Who né | ver mén | tions héll | to eárs | políte.

(*Moral Essays*, Epistle IV.)

It is obvious here that the trochee in the first foot of the fourth line is the only noteworthy liberty which the poet allows himself. We admire the polish and epigrammatic point of the lines, but our ears tell us that they lack the undefinable something that constitutes the spirit of true poetry. To help the appreciation of the force of the contrast both pieces should be read aloud, and it will then be seen how it is possible for two poets to use the same metre but to produce widely different effects with it. It will be noted that the feminine rhymes possible to Chaucer owing to the fully-sounded final *e* are impossible to Pope.

The following may be noted as examples from the *Pardoner's Tale* of Chaucer's metrical liberty:—

Catalexis: 502, 608.
Trochaic Commencement: 335, 627, 659, 670, 824.
Trochee following Caesura: 531, 552, 553, 871.
Elision: 416, 613, 852, 859, 862.

The most prominent characteristic of Chaucer's versification, however, in his use of feminine or dissyllabic rhymes—rhymes whose second syllable contains an unstressed *e*, rarely *i* (*y*), *ie*—which add an extra unaccented syllable to the lines in which they occur, making decasyllables into hendecasyllables.

The final syllabic *e*, whether found in the middle or at the end of a line, forms such an important and essential item in Chaucer's versification that we give here a classification of its various etymological or inflectional functions, with examples of each selected as far as possible from the *Pardoner's Tale*. Syllabic final *e* may represent or mark—

(i) The final **non-flexional** vowel or syllable of an O.E. word:—*dowvë*, 397; *oxë*, 354; *alë*, 321; *tongë*, 398; *hertë*, 902.

(ii) The final vowel of a word of **Romance** origin:—*peynë*, 330; *irë*, 657; *rotë*, 332; *glotonyë*, 498.

(iii) An **adverbial** (prepositional) termination:—*deerë*, 293, 502; *namoorë*, 746.

Nouns. (iv) An oblique case, almost always the dative, of a monosyllabic noun:—*levë*, 848; *sorwë*, 848.

Adjectives. (v) Plural, or an oblique case, of a monosyllabic adjective:—*yongë*, 478; *allë*, 600; *oldë*, 630; *largë*, 871.

(vi) The definite or weak form of a monosyllabic adjective, used (*a*) after a demonstrative or possessive, (*b*) in the vocative:—

(*a*) *ligë*, 337; *longë*, 347; *thilkë*, 364; *whitë*, 563.
(*b*) *leevë*, 731; *oldë*, 750.

Verbs. (vii) Infinitive:—*knowë*, 418; *drynkë*, 452; *makë*, 445; *tellë*, 660.

(viii) Dative Infinitive (preceded by *to*):—to *strecchë*, 395; to *prechë*, 461; to *fyndë*, 761.

(ix) Past participle of a strong verb:—*wonnë*, 389.

(x) Past tense of a weak, or "past-present," or anomalous verb:—*myghtë*, 609; *seydë*, 611; *taughtë*, 684; *woldë*, 724.

(xi) Other parts of verbs:—

(*a*) Pres. indic. 1st sing.:—*rekkë*, 405; *grauntë*, 822.

(*b*) Pres. indic. plural:—*knokkë*, 541.

(*c*) Subjunctive pres.:—*offrë*, 376.

(*d*) Imperative sing.:—*axë*, 667.

(*e*) Past indic. 2nd sing.:—No example.

(*f*) Past indic. plural (strong):—*werë*, 787.

(*g*) Past subjunctive (strong):—*werë*, 681.

In all these cases final *e* is to be sounded at the end of a line, and as a rule in any other position unless it precedes a word beginning with a vowel or with an unaspirated or lightly aspirated *h*, and even then it is at least slightly sounded if it occurs at the medial caesural pause in a line, as in—

"With lokkës crullë, as they were leyd in pressë."—A. 81.

Chaucer's wonderful ear for music, for rhythm, and for cadence is almost a discovery of the nineteenth century. It is true that the fifteenth century "makers" well-nigh worshipped Chaucer, but it must have been chiefly on account of other characteristics of his genius, especially his vocabulary; for it is hardly possible that Lydgate, for example, should have felt any great reverence for Chaucer's mastery of the technique of versification. The short and the long of the matter is, that Chaucer is one of our last poets, perhaps the very last, who made full metrical use of the syllabic *e* at the end of words,*—he may even have prolonged its existence as a separate syllable for a decade or two for the purposes of his metre,—and that his prosody remained more or less of a puzzle and a mystery, as it certainly was to Dryden, until the great work of

* The rhyming of words with an etymological final *e* with words with an unetymological final *e* is one of the readiest tests of the genuine or spurious character of poems ascribed to Chaucer.

Tyrwhitt, in the last quarter of the last century, put the matter on the right basis, and made the way clear for the full and perfect elucidation it has received in the present half-century.

Chaucer's claims as a metrist having once been vindicated, it was not unnatural that an element of exaggeration should have supervened. It is impossible to exaggerate Chaucer's merits in this regard when he is compared with his French and English predecessors. The verdict of Matthew Arnold is unassailable: "Of his style and manner, if we think first of the romance poetry and then of Chaucer's divine liquidness of diction, his divine fluidity of movement, it is difficult to speak temperately." But when it is maintained that Chaucer "leapt at one bound from the doggerel metre of romance poetry" to absolutely flawless music, it is evident that the difficulty of which Arnold speaks has infected criticism. Let it be said at once: there are halting and unmusical lines in Chaucer's best work (*e.g.* A. 391); but in that best work they form an insignificant minority. For Chaucer rapidly became a careful and finished metrical artist. One detailed illustration of this must suffice. Chaucer's vowels are *a*, *e*, *i*, *o*, and *u*, long and short (with Continental pronunciation), *plus* a long open *e* (like the first *e* in French *perle*) and a long open *o* (like the *oa* in *broad*). Generally Chaucer's long (close) *e* stands for an O.E. *ē* or *ēo*, and his long open *e* for an O.E. *ǣ* or *ēa*, or for an O.E. short *e* lengthened at the end of a syllable. Similarly, his long (close) *o* stands for an O.E. or old Norse *ō*, and his long open *o* for an O.E. or O.N. *ā*, or for a lengthened short *o*. Now Chaucer is careful, as far as possible, to avoid rhyming long close *e* with long open *e*, or long close *o* with long open *o*, as his successors and imitators habitually did: he does not rhyme *fo* (open), foe, with *sho*, shoe, or *do*, do, nor *teche* (open), teach, with *seche*, seek, if he can help it.

10. A Brief Sketch of Chaucer's Accidence.

I. Nouns.

The following are examples of the declension of nouns in Chaucer:—

(*a*) O.E. Masculines and Neuters (strong and weak).

	Singular.	Plural.
Nom. Acc.	cherl, day, ende, word, wyf	-es, -s
Gen.	-es, -s, wyves	-es, -s
Dat.	as nom. (though when nom. ended in a consonant -*e* is found)	-es, -s

Note 1.—The plural of some neuter long *o*- stems remained the same as the singular, e.g. *yeer, deer, scheep, swyn, hors.*

Note 2.—Some nouns of the O.E. -*n* stems retained the -*n* in the plural, as *yen* (eyes), *shoon, ton* (toes), *oxen,* although the plural in -*s* is also found, as *yes,* etc.

Note 3.—The nominative singular ended in -*e* where O.E. had a vowel, *a, o,* or *u.*

(*b*) O.E. Feminines (strong and weak).

	Singular.	Plural.
Nom. Acc.	lady, queene, hond	-es, -s
Gen.	-s, -es	-es, -s
Dat.	as nom. (though when nom. ended in a consonant -*e* is found)	-es, -s

Note 4.—Remnants of O.E. genitives in -*e* and -*an* (later modified to -*e*) occur in a few words: *helle, love*(*-day*), *lady, widwe.*

Note 5.—Some nouns of the O.E. *n*- stems retained the -*n* in the plural, as *been* (bees), *pesen* (peas), although the plural in -*s* is also found, *e.g. bees.*

Note 6. -*e* is the usual ending of the nominative singular.

Relics of O.E. minor declensions are found in the mutation-plurals *feet, men, gees, breech* (breeches), etc., and in such genitive forms as *fader, brother.*

Substantives of Romance origin were usually declined in the same way as those derived from O.E., e.g. *provenance.*

Words ending in *-s* were not inflected, *e.g.* singular, *vers*; plural, *vers*; nominative, *Venus*; genitive, *Venus*.

II. Adjectives.

Adjectives in Chaucer, as in O.E., had both weak and strong forms. The weak form was used as in O.E. (*a*) for the nominative of address, (*b*) after the definite article and demonstrative or possessive adjectives, and (*c*) often before a proper noun.

Adjectives were declined as follows:—

		Strong.	Weak.
All cases.	Singular.	smal, softe	smale, softe
,, ,,	Plural.	smale, softe	smale, softe

Adjectives of French origin sometimes retained their own plural, especially when preceded by their noun, as *temporel*, plural *temporels*.

Note.—The older genitive plural of the strong declension survives in *aller* (of all), used in such phrases as *oure aller cok*, "the cock of us all"; *aller* becomes *alder* in compounds, e.g. *alderbest*.

Adjectives were compared much as in modern English, though older forms are found, e.g. *strong*, *strenger*, *strengest*.

III. Verbs.

(*a*) Verbs borrowed from the Romance languages were weak with the exception of *strive* (*stroof*, *striven*).

Weak verbs formed their past tense in *-ed(e)* and their past participle in *ed-*, e.g. *fede*, *fedde*, *fed*. The past participle might have *i-*, *y-* (< O.E. *ge-*) prefixed, e.g. *y-crammed*. The *-d* of the past tense and past participle was changed to *-t* after certain final consonants of the stem, *e.g.*

bringe(n)	broghte	broght
reche(n)	raughte	raught
drenche(n)	dreinte	dreint
caste(n)	caste	cast

(*b*) Strong verbs were distinguished as in O.E. by their

gradation. Adopting the classification of Wyatt's *O.E. Grammar* we have :—

	Pres.	Pret. Sing.	Pret. Plur.	Pp.
I.	shīne(n)	shōn	shine(n)	shinen
	smīte(n)	smōt	smite(n)	smiten
II.	crēpe(n)	crēp	crōpe(n)	crōpen
	chēse(n)	chēs	chōsen [1]	chōsen
III.	helpe(n)	halp, holp	holpe(n)	holpen
	drinke(n)	drank, dronk	dronke(n)	drunken, dronken
IV.	bere(n)	bar, bor, beer	bare(n), bōre(n)[1], beeren	bōre(n)
V.	wreken	wrek	wrēke(n)	wreke(n) (wrōken)
VI.	fare(n)[2]			faren
	shape(n)	shōp	shōpe(n)	shāpen
	take(n)	tōk	tōken	tāken
VII.	slepe(n)	slēp	slēpe(n)	slēpen
	honge(n)	hēng	hēnge(n)	hongen

This class tended to develop weak forms.

Note.—The *-n* of the past participle might be dropped. As in the case of weak verbs *i-*, *y-* (< O.E. *ge-*) might be prefixed to the past participle, e.g. *yslayn.*

(*c*) The present indicative of both strong and weak verbs and the preterite indicative of weak verbs were conjugated in the same way. The endings were :— Singular : 1, *-e* ; 2, *-est* ; 3, *-eth*, *-th.* Plural : 1, 2, 3, *-e(n)* ; *e.g.*

Singular.	1.	shine
	2.	shinest
	3.	shineth
Plural.	1, 2, 3.	shine(n)

The preterite indicative of strong verbs differed, *e.g.*

Singular.	1.	shōn
	2.	shine and shon(e)
	3.	shon
Plural.	1, 2, 3.	shine(n)

[1] Here the vowel of the p.p. was lengthened and invaded the past tense forms.

[2] *Ferde*, a weak pret. from *fere(n)*, is used for the past.

The present subjunctive was the same for strong and weak verbs :—

Singular. 1, 2, 3. shine. Plural. 1, 2, 3. shine(n)

The past subjunctive strong and weak had the same endings *-e* and *-en*, but the strong past subjunctive was formed from the plural stem of the past indicative.

The imperative singular of weak verbs ended in *-e*, while strong verbs had the simple root. The plurals of both ended in *-e(th)*. The plural form in *-eth* was sometimes used for the singular as a deferential mode of address.

The present participle ended in *-inge*, the *-e* being usually sounded at the end of lines, but not elsewhere.

The ending of the infinitive was *-e(n)*, and remnants in *-ne* of the old dative infinitive (Wyatt, *O.E. Grammar*, § 66) are still found.

(*d*) Anomalous verbs.

Inf.	Pres. Ind.	Past Ind. Sing.	Past Ind. Pl.	Pp.
be(n)	am, art, is be(n), (aren)	was, wer, was	were(n)	be(n)
do(n)	do, pl. don	dide	dide(n)	do(n)
go(n)	go, pl. gon	yede wente	yede(n) wente(n)	go(n)
wille(n)	wil (wol), wilt, wil(n) (woln)	wolde	wolde	wold

(*e*) Past-Present Verbs, viz. verbs of which the present tense was originally a strong past (Wyatt, *O.E. Gr.*, § 95).

Class.	Inf.	Pres. Ind.	Pres. Plu.	Past Sing.	Past Pl.	Pp.
I.	wite(n)	wōt	wite(n)	wiste	wiste(n)	wist
	owe(n)	owe		oughte	oughte(n)	
III.	conne(n)	can	conne(n)	coude couthe	coude(n) couthe(n)	couth
	dare(n)	dar	dore(n) dare(n)	dorste	dorste(n)	
	(thar) impers.	thar (it behoves)		thurfte (it behoved)		
IV.	(shal)	shal	shul(e)n shul	sholde	sholde(n)	
V.	(may)	may	mow(e)n	mighte	mighte(n)	
VI.	(moot)	moot	moote(n)	moste	moste(n)	

IV. Pronouns.

(*a*) Personal. These pronouns were thus declined :—

		Sing.	Pl.
First person.	*Nom.*	I(y)	we
	Acc.	me	us
	Gen.	mīn	our(e)
	Dat.	me	us
Second person.	*Nom.*	thou	ye
	Acc.	thee	yow
	Gen.	thīn	your(e)
	Dat.	thee	yow

		Masc.	Fem.	Neut.	All genders.
Third person.	*Nom.*	he	she	hit	they
	Acc.	him	her(e) / hir(e)	hit	hem
	Gen.	his	her(e) / hir(e)	his	her(e) / hir(e)
	Dat.	him	her(e) / hir(e)	him	hem

(*b*) Relative. The usual relatives were *which* and *that*. These were used for all genders, singular and plural. The forms *whos* and *whom*, respectively genitive and dative singular and plural of *who*, were used for the genitive and dative of the relative.

(*c*) Demonstrative and interrogative pronouns. These were much as in modern English. The plural of *that*, however, is "tho" (O.E. ðā).

V. Adverbs.

Adverbs were formed from adjectives by the terminations *-e* and *-ly*, as :—

Adjective.	Adverb.
lyt (little)	lyte
lyght (light)	lyghtly

Romance adjectives added *-ly*, as :—

solempne	solempnely

The comparative and superlative of the adjective were used for the comparative and superlative of the adverb.

THE PARDONER'S TALE.

(Group C. 287—968.)

[*The wordes of the Hoost to the Phisicien and the Pardoner.*]

Oure Hoostë gan to swere as he were wood:
"Harrow!" quod he, "by naylës, and by blood,
This was a fals cherl and a fals justise!
As shameful deeth as hertë may devyse
Come to thise jugës, and hire advocatz!
Algate this sely mayde is slayn, allas!
Allas, to deerë boughtë she beautee!
Wherfore I seye al day, as men may see,
That yiftës of Fortune and of Nature
Been cause of deeth to many a creäture.
[~~Hire beautee was hire deth, I dar wel sayn;~~
~~Allas! so pitously as she was slayn!~~]
Of bothë yiftës that I speke of now
Men han ful oftë moorë harm than prow.
"But trewëly, myn owenë maister deere,
This is a pitous talë for to heere;
But nathëlees, passe over, is no fors;
I pray to God so save thy gentil cors,
. . . . . .
Thyn ypocras, and eek thy galiones,
And every boyste ful of thy letuarie;
God blesse hem, and oure lady Seint Marie!
So moot I theen, thou art a proprë man,

And lyk a prelat, by Seint Ronyan!
Seyde I nat wel? I kan nat speke in terme,
But wel I woot thou doost myn herte to erme,
That I almoost have caught a cardynacle.
By corpus bonës, but I have triacle,
Or elles a draughte of moyste and corny ale,
Or but I heere anon a myrie tale,
Myn herte is lost for pitee of this mayde.
Thou beel amy, thou Pardoner," he sayde,
"Tell us som myrthe or japës right anon!"
"It shal be doon," quod he, "by Seint Ronyon!
"But first," quod he, "heere at this alë stake
I wol both drynke and eten of a cake."
And right anon thise gentils gonne to crye,
"Nay, lat hym telle us of no ribaudye!
Telle us som moral thyng, that we may leere
Som wit, and thannë wol we gladly heere."
"I graunte, y-wis," quod he, "but I moot thynke
Upon som honeste thyng, while that I drynke."

Heere folweth the Prologe of the Pardoners Tale.

"Lordynges," quod he, "in chirchës whan I preche,
I peynë me to han an hauteyn speche,
And rynge it out as round as gooth a belle,
For I kan al by rotë that I telle.
My theme is alwey oon, and evere was,
Radix malorum est Cupiditas.
"First, I pronouncë whennës that I come,
And thanne my bullës shewe I, alle and some;
Our ligë lordës seel on my patente,
That shewe I first, my body to warente;
That no man be so boold, ne preest ne clerk,
Me to distourbe of Cristës hooly werk;
And after that thanne telle I forth my tales.

Bullës of popës and of cardynales,
Of patriarkes and bishoppës I shewe,
And in Latyn I speke a wordës fewe
To saffron with my predicacioun,
And for to stire hem to devocioun.
Thanne shewe I forth my longë cristal stones,
Y-crammëd ful of cloutës and of bones;
Relikes been they, as wenen they echoon;
Thanne have I in latoun a sholder boon
Which that was of an hooly Jewës sheepe.
"'Goode men,' I seye, "taak of my wordës keepe;
If that this boon be wasshe in any welle,
If cow, or calf, or sheepe, or oxë swelle
That any worm hath ete, or worm y-stonge,
Taak water of that welle and wassh his tonge,
And it is hool anon; and forthermoor,
Of pokkës, and of scabbe, and every soor,
Shal every sheepe be hool that of this welle
Drynketh a draughte. Taak kepe eek what I telle;
If that the goode-man that the beestës oweth
Wol every wyke, er that the cok hym croweth,
Fastynge, drinkë of this welle a draughte,
As thilkë hooly Jew oure eldrës taughte,
His beestës and his stoor shal multiplie.
"'And, sires, also it heeleth jalousie;
For though a man be falle in jalous rage,
Lat maken with this water his potage,
And never shal he moore his wyf mystriste,
Though he the soothe of hir defautë wiste.
"'Here is a miteyn eek, that ye may se!
He that his hand wol putte in this mitayn,
He shal have multiplying of his grayn,
Whan he hath sowën, be it whete or otes,
So that he offrë pens, or ellës grotes.

"'Goode men and wommen, o thyng warne I yow,
If any wight be in this chirchë now
That hath doon synnë horrible, that he
Dar nat for shame of it y-shryven be;
Or any womman, be she yong or old,
That hath y-maked hir housbonde cokëwold;
Swich folk shal have no power ne no grace,
To offren to my relikes in this place.
And whoso fyndeth hym out of swich fame,
They wol come up and offre on Goddës name,
And I assoille hem by the auctoritee
Which that by bulle y-graunted was to me.'
"By this gaude have I wonnë, yeer by yeer,
An hundred mark sith I was Pardoner.
I stondë lyk a clerk in my pulpet,
And when the lewëd peple is doun y-set,
I prechë so, as ye han herd bifoore,
And telle an hundred falsë japës moore.
Thanne peyne I me to strecchë forth the nekke,
And Est and West upon the peple I bekke,
As dooth a dowvë sittynge on a berne.
Myne handës and my tongë goon so yerne,
That it is joye to se my bisynesse.
Of avarice and of swich cursednesse
Is al my prechyng, for to make hem free
To yeven hir pens, and namely unto me.
For myn entente is nat but for to wynne,
And no thyng for correccioun of synne;
I rekkë neverë whan that they been beryed,
Though that hir soulës goon a blakëberyed.
For certës many a predicacioun
Comth oftë tyme of yvel entencioun:
Som for plesaunce of folk and flaterye,
To been avauncëd by ypocrisye:
And som for veyne glorie, and some for hate.

For whan I dar noon oother weyes debate,
Thanne wol I stynge hym with my tongë smerte
In prechyng, so that he shal nat asterte
To been defamëd falsly, if that he
Hath trespased to my bretheren or to me:
For though I tellë noght his proprë name,
Men shal wel knowë that it is the same
By signës, and by othere circumstances.
Thus quyte I folk that doon us displesances
Thus spitte I out my venym under hewe
Of hoolynesse, to semen hooly and trewe.
"But shortly myn entente I wol devyse,
I preche of no thyng but for coveityse;
Therfore my theme is yet and ever was,
Radix malorum est Cupiditas.
Thus kan I preche agayn that samë vice
Which that I use, and that is avarice.
But though myself be gilty in that synne,
Yet kan I maken oother folk to twynne
From avarice, and soorë to repente;
But that is nat my principal entente,—
I prechë no thyng but for coveitise:
Of this mateere it oghte ynogh suffise.
"Thanne telle I hem ensamples many oon
Of oldë stories longë tyme agoon;
For lewëd peple loven talës olde,
Swiche thyngës kan they wel reporte and holde.
What! trowë ye, the whilës I may preche,
And wynnë gold and silver for I teche,
That I wol lyve in poverte wilfully?
Nay, nay, I thoghte it nevere, trewëly.
For I wol preche and begge in sondry landes:
I wol nat do no labour with myne handes,
Ne makë baskettës and lyve therby,
By cause I wol nat beggen ydelly.

I wol noon of the Apostles countrefete:
I wol have moneie, wollë, chese, and whete,
Al were it yeven of the povereste page,
Or of the povereste wydwe in a village,
Al sholde hir children sterve for famyne.
Nay, I wol drynkë licour of the vyne,
And have a joly wenche in every toun.
But herkneth, lordynges, in conclusioun:
Youre likyng is that I shal telle a tale.
Now have I dronke a draughte of corny ale,
By God, I hope I shal yow telle a thyng
That shal by resoun been at your likyng;
For though myself be a ful vicious man,
A moral tale yet I yow tellë kan,
Which I am wont to preche, for to wynne.
Now hoold your pees, my tale I wol bigynne."

Heere bigynneth The Pardoners Tale.

In Flaundrës whilom was a compaignye
Of yongë folk, that haunteden folye,
As riot, hasard, stywës, and tavernes,
Whereas with harpës, lutës, and gyternes,
They daunce and pleyen at dees, bothe day and nyght,
And eten also, and drynken over hir myght;
Thurgh which they doon the devel sacrifise
Withinne that develes temple, in cursëd wise,
By superfluytee abhomynable.
Hir othës been so grete and so dampnable,
That it is grisly for to heere hem swere,
Oure blissëd Lordës body they to-tere:
Hem thoughte that Jewës rente hym noght ynough:
And ech of hem at otheres synnë lough.
And right anon thanne comen tombesteres,
Fetys and smale, and yongë frutesteres,

Syngeres with harpës, baudës, wafereres,
Whiche been the verray develes officeres,
To kyndle and blowe the fyr of lecherye,
That is annexëd unto glotonye.
The Hooly Writ take I to my witnesse,
That luxurie is in wyn and dronkënesse.

. . . . . .

Herodës,—whoso wel the stories soghte,—
Whan he of wyn was repleet at his feeste,
Right at his owenë table he yaf his heeste
To sleen the Baptist John, ful giltëlees.
Seneca seith a good word, doutëlees;
He seith he kan no differencë fynde
Bitwix a man that is out of his mynde
And a man which that is dronkëlewe,
But that woodnessë fallen in a shrewe
Persevereth lenger than dooth dronkenesse.
O glotonyë, ful of cursednesse;
O causë first of oure confusioun;
O original of oure dampnacioun,
Til Crist hadde boght us with his blood agayn!
Lo, how deerë, shortly for to sayn,
Aboght was thilkë cursëd vileynye:
Corrupt was al this world for glotonye!
Adam oure fader, and his wyf also,
Fro Paradys, to labour and to wo
Were dryven for that vice, it is no drede;
For whil that Adam fasted, as I rede,
He was in Paradys; and whan that he
Eet of the fruyt deffended on the tree,
Anon he was out cast to wo and peyne.
O glotonye, on thee wel oghte us pleyne!
O, wiste a man how manye maladyes
Folwen of excesse and of glotonyes,
He woldë been the moorë mesurable

Of his dietë, sittynge at his table!
Allas! the shortë throte, the tendrë mouth,
Maketh that Est and West, and North and South,
In erthe, in eir, in water, man to-swynke
To gete a glotoun deyntee mete and drynke.
Of this matiere, O Paul, wel kanstow trete!
"Mete unto wombe, and wombe eek unto mete,
Shal God destroyen bothe," as Paulus seith.
Allas! a foul thyng is it, by my feith,
To seye this word, and fouler is the dede
Whan man so drynketh of the white and rede,
That of his throte he maketh his pryvee,
Thurgh thilkë cursëd superfluitee.
The Apostel wepyng seith ful pitously:
"Ther walken manye of whiche yow toold have I,
I seye it now, wepyng with pitous voys,
That they been enemys of Cristës croys,
Of whiche the ende is deeth, wombe is hir god."
O wombe! O bely! O stynkyng is thi cod!
Fulfilled of donge and of corrupcioun!

. . . . . .

How greet labour and cost is thee to fynde!
Thise cookës, how they stampe, and streyne, and grynde,
And turnen substaunce into accident,
To fulfillen al thy likerous talent!
Out of the hardë bonës knokkë they
The mary, for they castë noght awey
That may go thurgh the golet softe and swoote.
Of spicerie, of leef, and bark, and roote,
Shal been his sauce y-makëd by delit,
To make hym yet a newer appetit;
But certës he that haunteth swiche delices
Is deed, whil that he lyveth in tho vices.
A lecherous thyng is wyn, and dronkenesse
Is ful of stryvyng and of wrecchednesse.

O dronkë man! disfigured is thy face,
Sour is thy breeth, foul artow to embrace,
And thurgh thy dronkë nose semeth the soun,
As though thou seydest ay, "Sampsoun, Sampsoun!"
And yet, God woot, Sampsoun drank nevere no wyn.
Thou fallest as it were a stykëd swyn;
Thy tonge is lost and al thyn honeste cure;
For dronkenesse is verray sepulture
Of mannës wit and his discrecioun.
In whom that drynke hath dominacioun,
He kan no conseil kepe, it is no drede.
Now kepe yow fro the white and fro the rede,
And namely fro the whitë wyn of Lepe,
That is to selle in Fysshstrete, or in Chepe.
This wyn of Spaignë crepeth subtilly
In othere wynës growynge fastë by,
Of which ther ryseth swich fumositee,
That whan a man hath dronken draughtes thre,
And weneth that he be at hoom in Chepe,
He is in Spaigne, right at the toune of Lepe,
Nat at the Rochele, ne at Burdeux toun,
And thannë wol he seye, "Sampsoun, Sampsoun!"
But herkneth, lordës, o word, I yow preye,
That alle the sovereyn actës, dar I seye,
Of victories in the Oldë Testament
Thurgh verray God that is omnipotent,
Were doon in abstinence and in preyere:
Looketh the Bible and ther ye may it leere.
Looke, Attilla, the gretë conquerour,
Deyde in his sleepe with shame and dishonour,
Bledynge ay at his nose in dronkenesse;
A capitayn sholde lyve in sobrenesse.
And over al this, avyseth yow right wel
What was comaunded unto Lamuel,—
Nat Samuel, but Lamuel seye I;

Redeth the Bible, and fynde it expresly—
Of wyn-yevyng to hem that han justise.
Namoore of this, for it may wel suffise.
And now I have yspoke of glotonye!
Now wol I yow deffenden hasardrye.
Hasard is verray mooder of lesynges,
And of deceite, and cursëd forswerynges,
Blaspheme of Crist, manslaughtre, and wast also
Of catel, and of tyme; and forthermo
It is repreeve and contrarie of honour
For to ben holde a commune hasardour;
And ever the hyer he is of estaat,
The moorë is he holden desolaat.
If that a pryncë useth hasardrye,
In allë governaunce and policye
He is, as by commune opinioun,
Y-holde the lasse in reputacioun.
Stilbon, that was a wys embassadour,
Was sent to Corynthe in ful greet honour
Fro Lacidomye to maken hire alliaunce.
And when he cam, hym happedë par chaunce
That alle the gretteste that were of that lond
Pleyynge attë hasard he hem fond;
For which, as soonë as it myghtë be,
He stal hym hoom agayn to his contree,
And seydë: "Ther wol I nat lese my name,
Ne I wol nat take on me so greet defame,
Yow for to allie unto none hasardours;
Sendeth otherë wise embassadours,
For, by my trouthë, me were levere dye,
Than I yow sholde to hasardours allye;
For ye that been so glorious in honours,
Shul nat allyën yow with hasardours,
As by my wyl, ne as by my tretee!"
This wisë philosophrë thus seyde hee.

Looke eek that to the kyng Demetrius
The kyng of Parthës, as the book seith us,
Sente him a paire of dees of gold in scorn,
For he hadde usëd hasard ther-biforn;
For which he heeld his glorie or his renoun
At no value or reputacioun.
Lordës may fynden oother maner pley
Honeste ynough to dryve the day awey.
Now wol I speke of othës false and grete
A word or two, as oldë bookës trete.
Gret sweryng is a thyng abhominable,
And fals sweryng is yet moore reprevable.
The heighë God forbad sweryng at al:
Witnesse on Mathew; but in special
Of sweryng seith the hooly Jeremye,
"Thou shalt seye soothe thyne othës, and nat lye,
And swere in doom, and eek in rightwisnesse";
But ydel sweryng is a cursednesse.
Bihoold and se, that in the firstë table
Of heighë Goddës heestës honurable,
How that the seconde heeste of hym is this:
"Take nat my name in ydel, or amys."
Lo, rather he forbedeth swich sweryng
Than homycide, or any cursëd thyng;
I seye that as by ordrë thus it stondeth.
This knowen that his heestës understondeth,
How that the seconde heeste of God is that.
And forther over, I wol thee telle al plat,
That vengeance shal nat parten from his hous
That of his othes is to outrageous:—
"By Goddës precious herte!" and, "By his nayles!"
And, "By the blood of Crist that is in Hayles
Sevene is my chaunce, and thyn is cynk and treye!"
"By Goddës armës, if thou falsly pleye,
This daggere shal thurghout thyn hertë go!"—

This fruyt cometh of the bicchëd bonës two,
Forsweryng, irë, falsnesse, hõmycide.
Now for the love of Crist that for us dyde,
Letë youre othës, bothë grete and smalë:
But, sires, now wol I tellë forth my tale.—
Thise riotourës thre of whiche I telle,
Longe erst er primë rong of any belle,
Were set hem in a taverne for to drynke,
And as they sat they herde a bellë clynke
Biforn a cors was caried to his grave,
That oon of hem gan callen to his knave:
"Go bet," quod he, "and axë redily
What cors is this that passeth heer forby;
And looke that thou reporte his namë weel."
"Sire," quod this boy, "it nedeth neveradeel;
It was me toold er ye cam heer two houres.
He was, pardee, an old felawe of youres,
And sodeynly he was y-slayn to-nyght
For-dronke, as he sat on his bench upright.
Ther cam a privee theef, men clepeth Deeth,
That in this contree al the peplë sleeth,
And with his spere he smoot his herte atwo,
And wente his wey withouten wordës mo.
He hath a thousand slayn this pestilence,
And, maister, er ye come in his presence,
Me thynketh that it werë necessarie
For to be war of swich an adversarie;
Beth redy for to meete hym evermoore;
Thus taughtë me my dame; I sey namoore."
"By Seinte Marië!" seyde this taverner,
"The child seith sooth, for he hath slayn this yeer,
Henne over a mile, withinne a greet village,
Bothe man and womman, child, and hyne, and page;
I trowe his habitacioun be there.
To been avysëd greet wysdom it were,

Er that he dide a man a dishonour."
"Ye, Goddës armës!" quod this riotour,
"Is it swich peril with hym for to meete?
I shal hym seke by wey and eek by strete,
I make avow to Goddës dignë bones!"
Herkneth, felawës, we thre been al ones,
Lat ech of us holde up his hand til oother,
And ech of us bicomen otheres brother,
And we wol sleen this falsë traytour, Deeth;
He shal be slayn, which that so manye sleeth,
By Goddës dignitee, er it be nyght!"
Togidres han thise thre hir trouthës plight
To lyve and dyen ech of hem for oother,
As though he were his owene y-borë brother.
And up they stirte, al dronken, in this rage,
And forth they goon towardës that village,
Of which the taverner hadde spoke biforn;
And many a grisly ooth thanne han they sworn,
And Cristës blessed body they to-rente,—
Deeth shal be deed, if that they may hym hente.
Whan they han goon nat fully half a mile,
Right as they wolde han troden over a stile,
An oold man and a pourë with hem mette.
This oldë man ful mekëly hem grette,
And seydë thus: "Now, lordës, God yow see!"
The proudeste of thise riotourës three
Answerde agayn: "What, carl with sory grace,
Why artow al forwrapped, save thy face?
Why lyvëstow so longe in so greet age?
This oldë man gan looke in his visage,
And seyde thus: "For I ne kan nat fynde
A man, though that I walkëd into Ynde,
Neither in citee, nor in no village,
That woldë chaunge his youthë for myn age;
And therfore moot I han myn agë stille,

As longë tyme as it is Goddës wille.
Ne Deeth, allas! ne wol nat han my lyf,
Thus walke I lyk a restëlees kaityf,
And on the ground, which is my moodrës gate,
I knokkë with my staf, erly and late,
And seyë: "Leevë mooder, leet me in!
Lo, how I vanysshe, flessh, and blood, and skyn!
Allas! whan shul my bonës been at reste?
Mooder, with yow wolde I chaungë my cheste
That in my chambrë longë tyme hath be,
Ye, for an heyrë-clowt to wrappë me!"
But yet to me she wol nat do that grace,
For which ful pale and welkëd is my face.
But, sires, to yow it is no curteisye
To speken to an old man vileynye,
But he trespasse in word, or elles in dede.
In Hooly Writ ye may your self wel rede:
"Agayns an oold man, hoor upon his heed,
Ye sholde arise." Wherfore I yeve yow reed,
Ne dooth unto an oold man noon harm now,
Namoorë than that ye wolde men did to yow
In agë, if that ye so longe abyde.
And God be with yow, where ye go or ryde,
I moote go thider as I have to go!"
"Nay, oldë cherl, by God, thou shalt nat so!"
Seydë this oother hasardour anon;
"Thou partest nat so lightly, by Seint John!
Thou spak right now of thilkë traytour Deeth,
That in this contree alle oure freendës sleeth.
Have heer my trouthe, as thou art his espye,
Telle where he is, or thou shalt it abye,
By God and by the Hooly Sacrement!
For soothly thou art oon of his assent
To sleen us yongë folk, thou falsë theef!"
"Now, sires," quod he, "if that yow be so leef

To fyndë Deeth, turne up this croked wey;
For in that grove I lafte hym, by my fey,
Under a tree, and there he wole abyde;
Noght for youre boost he wole him no thyng hyde.
Se ye that ook? Right there ye shal hym fynde.
God savë yow that boghte agayn mankynde,
And yow amende!" thus seyde this oldë man.
And everich of thise riotourës ran
Til he cam to that tree; and ther they founde,
Of floryns fyne of gold y-coynëd rounde,
Wel ny an eightë busshels, as hem thoughte.
No lenger thannë after Deeth they soughte,
But ech of hem so glad was of that sighte,
For that the floryns been so faire and brighte,
That doun they sette hem by this precious hoord.
The worste of hem he spak the firstë word.
"Brethren," quod he, "taak kepë what I seye;
My wit is greet, though that I bourde and pleye;
This tresor hath Fortune unto us yeven
In myrthe and joliftee our lyf to lyven;
And lightly as it comth so wol we spende.
Ey, Goddës precious dignitee! who wende
To-day that we sholde han so fair a grace?
But myghte this gold be caried fro this place
Hoom to myn hous, or ellës unto youres,—
For wel ye woot that al this gold is oures,—
Thanne werë we in heigh felicitee!
But trewëly by daye it may nat bee;
Men woldë seyn that we were thevës stronge,
And for oure owenë tresor doon us honge.
This tresor moste y-caried be by nyghte
As wisely and as slyly as it myghte.
Wherfor I rede that Cut among us alle
Be drawe, and lat se wher the Cut wol falle.
And he that hath the Cut with hertë blithe

Shal rennë to the towne, and that ful swithe,
And brynge us breed and wyn ful privëly;
And two of us shul kepen subtilly
This tresor wel; and if he wol nat tarie,
Whan it is nyght we wol this tresor carie
By oon assent, where as us thynketh best.".
That oon of hem the Cut broghte in his fest,
And bad hem drawe and looke where it wol falle;
And it fil on the yongeste of hem alle,
And forth toward the toun he wente anon.
And al so soonë as that he was gon,
That oon of hem spak thus unto that oother:
"Thow knowest wel thou art my swornë brother,
Thy profit wol I tellë thee anon.
Thou woost wel that oure felawe is agon,
And heere is gold, and that ful greet plentee,
That shal departed been among us thre.
But nathëlees, if I kan shape it so
That it departed were among us two,
Hadde I nat doon a freendës torn to thee?"
That oother answerde, "I noot how that may be;
He woot how that the gold is with us tweye;
What shal we doon? what shal we to him seye?"
"Shal it be conseil?" seyde the firstë shrewe,
"And I shal tellen in a wordës fewe
What we shal doon, and bryngen it wel aboute."
"I grauntë," quod that oother, "out of doute,
That by my trouthe I shal thee nat biwreye."
"Now," quod the firste, "thou woost wel we be tweye,
And two of us shul strenger be than oon:
Looke whan that he is set, and right anoon
Arys, as though thou woldest with hym pleye,
And I shal ryve hym thurgh the sydës tweye,
Whil that thou strogelest with hym as in game;
And with thy daggere looke thou do the same;

And thanne shal al this gold departed be,
My deerë freend, bitwixen me and thee.
Thanne may we bothe our lustës all fulfille,
And pleye at dees right at oure owenë wille.'
And thus acorded been thise shrewës tweye,
To sleen the thridde, as ye han herd me seye.

This yongeste, which that wente unto the toun,
Ful ofte in herte he rolleth up and doun
The beautee of thise floryns newe and brighte.
"O Lord," quod he, "if so were that I myghte
Have al this tresor to my selfe allone,
Ther is no man that lyveth under the trone
Of God, that sholdë lyve so murye as I!"
And attë laste the feend, oure enemy,
Putte in his thought that he sholde poyson beye,
With which he myghtë sleen hise felawes tweye;
For why the feend foond hym in swich lyvynge
That he hadde levë hym to sorwë brynge;
For this was outrëly his fulle entente
To sleen hem bothe, and nevere to repente.

And forth he gooth, no lenger wolde he tarie,
Into the toun, unto a pothecarie,
And preydë hym that he hym woldë selle
Som poysoun, that he myghte his rattës quelle:
And eek ther was a polcat in his hawe,
That, as he seyde, his capouns hadde y-slawe;
And fayn he woldë wreke hym, if he myghte,
On vermyn, that destroyëd hym by nyghte.
The pothecarie answerde: "And thou shalt have
A thyng that, al so God my soulë save,
In al this world ther is no creäture,
That eten or dronken hath of this confiture,
Noght but the montance of a corn of whete,
That he ne shal his lif anon forlete;
Ye, sterve he shal, and that in lassë while

Than thou wolt goon a-paas nat but a mile;
This poysoun is so strong and violent."
This cursëd man hath in his hond y-hent
This poysoun in a box, and sith he ran
Into the nextë strete unto a man,
And borwëd hym largë botelës thre,
And in the two his poyson poured he.
The thridde he kepte clene for his owenë drynke,
For al the nyght he shoope him for to swynke
In cariynge of the gold out of that place.
And whan this riotour with sory grace
Hadde filled with wyn his gretë botels thre,
To his felawes agayn repaireth he.
What nedeth it to sermone of it moore?
For right as they hadde cast his deeth bifoore,
Right so they han hym slayn, and that anon.
And whan that this was doon, thus spak that oon:
"Now lat us sitte and drynke, and make us merie,
And afterward we wol his body berie";
And with that word it happëd hym par cas,
To take the botel ther the poysoun was,
And drank, and yaf his felawe drynke also,
For which anon they storven bothë two.
But certës, I suppose that Avycen
Wroot nevere in no Canon, ne in no Fen,
Mo wonder signës of empoisonyng
Than hadde thise wrecches two er hir endyng.
Thus ended been thise homycidës two,
And eek the false empoysonere also.
O cursëd synne of allë cursednesse!
O traytours homycide, O wikkednesse!
O glotonye, luxurie, and hasardrye!
Thou blasphemour of Crist with vileynye,
And othës grete, of usage and of pride!
Allas! Mankyndë, how may it bitide

That to thy Crëatour, which that thee wroghte,
And with his precious hertë-blood thee boghte,
Thou art so fals and so unkynde, allas!

Now, goode men, God foryeve yow youre trespas,
And ware yow fro the synne of avarice!
Myn hooly pardoun may yow alle warice,
So that ye offre nobles, or sterlynges,
Or ellës silver broches, spoonës, rynges.
Boweth youre heed under this hooly bulle!
Com up, ye wyvës, offreth of youre wolle!
Youre names I entre heer in my rolle anon;
Into the blisse of hevene shul ye gon;
I yow assoillë by myn heigh powër,
Yow that wol offre, as clene and eek as cleer
As ye were born; and lo, sires, thus I preche!
And Jhesu Crist, that is oure soulës leche,
So grauntë you his pardoun to receyve,
For that is best, I wol yow nat deceyve!

"But, sires, o word forgat I in my tale:
I have relikes and pardoun in my male
As faire as any man in Engelond,
Whiche were me yeven by the Popës hond.
If any of yow wole of devocioun
Offren, and han myn absolucioun,
Com forth anon, and kneleth heere adoun,
And mekëly receyveth my pardoun;
Or ellës, taketh pardoun as ye wende,
Al newe and fressh at every milës ende,
So that ye offren, alwey newe and newe,
Nobles or pens, whiche that be goode and trewe.
It is an honour to everich that is heer
That ye mowe have a suffisant Pardoneer
Tassoillë yow in contree as ye ryde,

For aventures whiche that may bityde.
Paraventure ther may fallen oon or two
Doun of his hors, and breke his nekke atwo;
Looke which a seuretee is it to yow alle,
That I am in youre felaweshipe y-falle,
That may assoillë yow, bothe moore and lasse,
Whan that the soule shal fro the body passe.
I redë that oure Hoost heere shal bigynne,
For he is moost envoluped in synne!
Com forth, sire Hoost, and offrë first anon,
And thou shalt kisse my relikes everychon,
Ye, for a grote! Unbokele anon thy purs!"
"Nay, nay," quod he, "thanne have I Cristës curs!
Lat be," quod he, "it shal nat be, so theech!
Thou woldest make me kisse thyn oldë breech,
And swere it were a relyk of a seint,
This Pardoner answerde nat a word,
So wrooth he was: no word ne wolde he seye.
"Now," quod oure Hoost, "I wol no lenger pleye
With thee, ne with noon oother angry man."
But right anon the worthy Knyght bigan,
Whan that he saugh that al the peple lough:—
"Namoore of this, for it is right ynough!
Sire Pardoner, be glad and myrie of cheere,
And ye, sir Hoost, that been to me so deere,
I prey yow that ye kisse the Pardoner!
And Pardoner, I prey thee drawe thee neer,
And as we diden, lat us laughe and pleye!"
Anon they kiste and ryden forth hir weye.

[*Heere is ended The Pardoners Tale.*]

NOTES ON "THE PARDONER'S TALE."

287. **oure . . . wood**: "Our host swore as if he were mad." He did so because of the unhappy fate of Virginia just narrated by the Doctor. *Gan* is not short for "began," but comes from *ginnen*, "to begin"; see Glossary. In M.E. *gan* is often a mere auxiliary meaning "did" and is sometimes by confusion spelt *kan*. For *wood* cp. *Midsummer Night's Dream*, II. i. 192, "And here am I, and wood within this wood."

288. **harrow!**: a cry to one's lord for help in feudal times, < Frankish *haran*, "to cry out." In Jersey, at the present day, all encroachments on property may be resisted by the aggrieved party's exclaiming before two witnesses, "*Haro! Haro! Haro! à l'aide mon Prince! on me fait tort*" ("Harrow! help Prince, I am being wronged!"). The custom is known as *Clameur de Haro*, and is said to have existed in the north-east of France before the arrival of the Northmen.

by nayles: *i.e.* the nails which fastened Christ to the cross; see note on line 651.

289. **this**: *i.e.* Appius, "the false justice" in the *Doctor's Tale*, known to Roman legend as Appius Claudius; see Livy, III. 44-8.

cherl: properly "a peasant" had already acquired a depreciatory meaning.

291. **come . . . advocatz**: the Ellesmere MS. reads "false juges," which will not scan.

292. **algate**: "at any rate"; *i.e.* in spite of anything we can do.

sely: has deteriorated in meaning just as "simple" has done. O.E. *sælig* from *sæl*, season, meant originally seasonable, then happy; cp. German *selig*, blessed. The deterioration had begun in Chaucer's day, and he uses *sely* depreciatingly in *The Canon's Yeoman's Tale*, G. 1076.

297-8. **hire beautee . . . slayn**: these two lines are inserted in most modern editions, but are not found in the Ellesmere MS. or in the majority of the best MSS. At best they are a weak repetition of what has gone before. They are retained in the text merely for convenience' sake.

299. **of bothe . . . prow**: "from both the gifts of which I am now speaking men derive full oft more harm than advantage." The Ellesmere MS. inserts "for" before "harm," which gives a different sense, but is awkward on account of the "of."

302. **for to heere**: see note on line 401.

303. **but . . . fors**: "but nevertheless, let us say no more about it, there is no necessity." *It*, the subject of *is*, is omitted. *No fors* in Chaucer means "no matter."

306. **thyn ypocras . . . galiones**: the host is somewhat given to malapropisms, as he notes himself—"I kan nat speke in terme" (line 311)—and knowing that Hippocrates and Galen were the revered founders of medical science he innocently or more probably maliciously confounds them with two things of which he as an innkeeper knows more—hippocras and gallons. Hippocras was a medieval wine negus, so called from being passed through a strainer which in the jargon of apothecaries was called "Hippocrates' sleeve."

307. **and . . . letuarie**: "and every box full of thy electuary." An *electuary* was a medicine that dissolved in the mouth; a powder in jam is its modern form.

309. **so . . . man**: "So may I flourish, you are a handsome man." This meaning of "proper" is Shakespearean, and still survives in dialect. For *theen* see Glossary.

310. **Seint Ronyan**: it is hardly necessary to search the calendar of the saints for "St. Ronyan" (O.F. *rogne*, a scab; *rogneux*, a scurvy fellow; cp. *Macbeth*, I. iii. 6, "Aroint thee, witch, the rump-fed *ronyon* cries"; *Rom. of the Rose*, 553, "Without bleyne, scabbe, or *royne*"). The doctor's profession and the mention of the word "prelat" suggest to this inn-keeping humourist the addition of a new saint to the calendar, as is shown by the ironical humility of the next line:—

311. **seyde . . . terme**: "Have I made any mistake? I am bad at technical terms."

312. **but wel I woot . . . . erme**: "but I do know this, you make my heart grieve so that I almost have stomach-ache." The Host is continuing his chaff of the medical profession. The best MSS. read *cardynacle*, which may be meant to represent a blunder of the Host's, as if he derived it from "cardinal." It is a mistake for *Cardiacle*, which means a heart-burn. The "cardia" is the upper orifice of the stomach.

314. **by corpus bones**: another jumble of the Host's. He confuses two common oaths "*Corpus Domini!*" (The Lord's Body; cp. the ordinary Italian substitute, "*Corpo di Baccho!*") and "Cokkes Bones!" where "Cokkes" is substituted for "Goddes" out of reverence.

triacle: our "treacle," but meaning "a panacea"; cp. Jeremy Taylor: "We kill the viper but make treacle of him." *Treacle* has a very dignified origin, coming from the Gk. *θήρ*, a wild beast, O.F. *thériaque*, a cure for a wound inflicted by a wild beast. The *l* in the English form is intrusive, as in *cardiacle* above. In the *Man of Law's Tale* (B. 479) Christ is spoken of as "triacle" or balm for every hurt.

315. **or elles . . . ale**: "or else a draught of new beer tasting of the barley-corn." For *moyste* see Glossary.

319. **anon**: has in Chaucer its Shakespearean meaning "immediately."

320. **Seint Ronyon**: the pardoner adopts merrily the Host's new saint. Skeat thinks "Seint Ronyan" is the St. Ronan of Scott's "St. Ronan's Well," but the great number of variant readings, "Rinian," "Romian," "Julian," "Damyon," "Nynyan," etc., favour the conjecture made in the note on line 310 above.

321. **ale stake**: an "ale-stake" was, what may still be seen in France, a pole projecting from a road-side public-house, decked with an evergreen garland or "bush" to show that liquor is sold on the premises; cp. the proverb "Good wine needs no bush!" ("*A bon vin point d'enseigne!*")

322. **cake**: "loaf"; cp. oat-cake. The common American expression "my cake is dough" is a legacy from the days of Shakespeare (cp. *Taming of the Shrew*, I. i. 110 and V. i. 145).

323. **gonne**: pret. pl. of *ginnen*; see note on line 287.

329. **lordynges**: "my little lords." The sanctimonious rascal after his visit to the ale-stake strikes at once the exact note of his character, deferential flattery. His brother rascal the Summoner begins his story in the same way (D. 1668), while with the Host (Prol. 761), as urbanity is part of his trade, "lordings" is naturally a favourite word.

330. **I . . . speche**: "I take pains to raise my voice." *Hauteyn* might have here the meaning of its cognate, "haughty," were it not clear that the Pardoner is contrasting the pitch of his voice with the depth of its bell-like tone.

331. **and . . . belle**: "and I make my speech ring out as round and clear as a bell."

332. **kan**: "know"; this, the meaning of the O.E. *cunnan*, is still found frequently in Chaucer; see Glossary; cp. *Man of Law's Tale*, 47-48:—

> "But Chaucer, thogh he kan but lewedly,
> On metres and on rymying craftily."

334. **radix**, etc.: "The love of money is the root of all evil" (1 Tim. vi. 10). This is the text of the Pardoner's sermon.

335. **first . . . come**: "I first make known whence I come." In this case it was from the court of Rome (*Prol.* 671).

336. **bulles**: properly a papal rescript bearing the round leaden seal or *bulla* stamped with the figures of SS. Peter and Paul on the obverse and the name of the Pope who gave it on the reverse. This is *oure lige lordes seel* in the next line, while the *patente* is the permission given to the Pardoner to ask alms of the faithful. In line 342 *bullës* is used more widely of other prelates' patents.

337. **oure lige lordes**: the point is that the Pardoner's liege lord is not the King but the Pope.

339. **clerk**: technically, as here, denotes any person who had received the tonsure, which set aside the recipient for the ecclesiastical state, and was a necessary preliminary to minor orders. As

all clerks, however, did not proceed to holy orders the word became synonymous with "man of education," or "student," as in "the yonge poure clerkes two" of Cambridge in *The Reeve's Tale*.

343. **patriarkes**: originally the title seems to have been reserved for the occupants of the three sees said to have been held successively by St. Peter—Antioch, Alexandria, and Rome. It was afterwards given as a title of honour to those metropolitans who had other metropolitans under them, *e.g.* Constantinople, Venice, and Lisbon.

345. **to . . . predicacioun**: "to give my preaching a tinge of learning." This is a satirical hit at the custom, not yet dead by any means, of larding a sermon with scraps of Latinity. Saffron was indispensable in the medieval kitchen. It seems to have been as much valued for its flavour as for the rich egg-like colour it gave to food when a rigorous fast banished the egg. The Pardoner's learning, like the Cornish saffron-cake, was a colourable imitation.

347. **longë cristal stones . . . bones**: long reliquaries with a rock-crystal front crammed full of rags and bones. For *stones* compare *King Lear*, V. iii. 261:—

> "Lend me a looking-glass;
> If that her breath will mist or stain the *stone*,
> Why then she lives."

350. **latoun**: a mixed metal, here a kind of brass. A reliquary of latten is meant.

a sholder boon: the "shoulder-bone," as is noted in the *Parson's Tale* (604), was in great repute among professors of the black art.

352. **taak . . . keepe**: "pay heed to what I say"; the phrase *taken kepe* is usually constructed with *of*, as here; cp. "Of nyce conscience took he no *kepe*," but in lines 360 and 777 *taak* is followed by two accusatives.

353. **wasshe**: the *n* of the participial ending is frequently dropped; cp. *ete* in next line; *wash* was originally a strong verb (O.E. *wascan*, pret. sing. *wōsc*, pret. plur. *wōscon*, pp. *ge-wascen*).

355. **that . . . y-stonge**: "that any snake hath bitten or stung."

361. **the goode-man**: the householder.

362. **wol . . . croweth**: "will every week before the cock crows him up in the morning."

365. **his beestes . . . multiplie**: from the allusion to the multiplication of beasts Skeat thinks Jacob is the Holy Jew; see Genesis, xxx. 32 fol.

372. **míteyn**: words derived from the Norman French tend as they become familiar to adopt English stress. Chaucer uses either stress at will to suit his metre; cp. *mítáyn* in the next line and the accentuation of *boteles* in line 871 and of *botels* in 877.

376. **so that**: "provided that."

384. **to offren . . . place**: "to offer alms in return for being allowed to venerate my relics here."

385. **out of**: "free from."

386. **they**: referring to *who-so*; a sense construction common in O.E. and M.E.

390. **an hundred mark**: taking a mark as equal to 13s. 4d. this would be £66 13s. 4d., a very large income for those days, being worth about ten times as much as now. Chaucer's own income in his most prosperous times does not seem ever to have been much more than this.

392. **and . . . y-set**: "and when the unlettered or lay people have sat down." *Lewed* our "lewd" is a good instance of deterioration in meaning; O.E. *lǣwede* meant a layman, and as in the note on line 339 we have seen that "clerk" came to mean a scholar, so the *lewed man* descended to mean in Chaucer's day an ignorant, in Shakespeare's day a base, and in our day a lewd, man.

397. **as dooth a dowvë**: the allusion is to the nodding motion of the head of the domestic pigeon.

399. **bisynesse**: in its original meaning "busy-ness," "hard work."

401. **for to make**: O.E. had two forms of the infinitive, the simple without a proposition, as *macian*, and the gerund governed by *tō* and dative in form, as *tō macianne*. The former seems to imply the mere action of the verb, while the latter implies purpose, or action directed to an object. In Chaucer the infinitive ends indifferently in *-en* or in *-ë*; cp. with this line Prol., lines 12, 13:—

> "Thanne longen folk *to goon* on pilgrimages,
> And palmeres *for to seken* straungë strondes."

The use of the redundant *for* still survives as a vulgarism.

402. **namely**: "especially."

403. **for myn entente . . . wynne**: "for my intention is only to make gain"; *nat but*, "only," still survives in the north-country "nobbut."

406. **though that . . . blakeberyed**: "although their souls go astray," *lit.* "although their souls go black-berrying." Skeat was the first to show the meaning of this line. The ending in *-ed*, where we should expect the gerund in *-inge*, is a survival of the O.E. ending of verbal nouns in *-ð*; cp. in The Voyage of Ohthere (Alfred's *Orosius*): "wiciað Finnas on *huntoðe* on wintra, and on sumera on *fiscaðe*." For the meaning cp. the modern French *faire l'école buissonnière*, "to go to school in the bushes," *i.e.* "to play truant." In the *Wife of Bath's Prol.* (D. 352) we have:—

> "But forth she wole, er any day be dawed,
> To shewe hir skyn, and goon a-caterwawed."

i.e. a-caterwauling.

407. **for certes . . . entencioun**: "for certainly many sermons are often due to evil intentions."

413. **hym**: *i.e.* the man whom I wish to attack. The logical antecedent is the *he* in line 415.

414. **so that . . . bretheren or to me**: "so that he shall not escape being slandered, if he has ever offended against any of my

order or myself." The "bretheren" may point to the Pardoner's being the member of some such "association" of Pardoners as Pope Boniface IX. denounced by Bull in the year 1390.

423. **but . . . devyse**: "but I will explain in a few words my procedure."

440. **for**: "because."

441. **wilfully**: "voluntarily"; another word that has changed in meaning.

445. **ne makë baskettës . . . countrefete**: the allusion is evidently to Acts xviii. 3, where we read that St. Paul lived by his labours as a tent-maker, not as a basket-maker. The confusion may have arisen from St. Paul's being let down from the walls of Damascus in a basket, 2 Cor. xi. 33.

454. **herkneth**: imperative plural. This ending was already disappearing and we have frequently the shortened modern form; cp. *taak*, 352, *hoold*, 462.

464. **that haunteden folye**: "who gave themselves up to folly."

466. **whereas**: "in which."

468. **over hir myght**: "beyond their capacity"; "to excess."

470. **withinne . . . temple**: "in any place of sin."

471. **abhomynable**: the spelling is due to the false derivation from Lat. *homo*, *hominis*.

474. **oure blissëd Lordës body they to-tere**: the allusion is to the blasphemous medieval habit of swearing by different parts of Our Lord's body and in this way dividing or tearing it; cp. *The Parson's Tale*, I. 591: "Ne swereth nat so sinfully in dismembrynge of Crist by soule, herte, bones, and body." The *to-* in *to-tere* is the O.E. prefix denoting separation: it was gradually confused with the preposition; cp. the Authorised Version, Judges ix. 53: "and all to brake his scull."

475. **hem thoughte**: "it seemed to them." The impersonal O.E. verb *ðyncan*, to seem, was confused with its cognate *ðencan*, to think. In Modern English *ðyncan* survives only in combination with *me* in "methinks" and "methought."

476. **synnë**: the final-sounded *-e* marks the O.E. feminine plural.

lough: a strong verb in O.E. *hlīehhan*, *hlōh*, *hlōgon*; the *-gh* represents a Norman-French attempt to represent the guttural *-h* which the Englishman had not yet lost.

477-8. **tombesteres, frutesteres**: "dancing-girls and girls selling fruit"; *-stere* in O.E. denotes a female agent. Its feminine force survives only in "spinster," while it is seen denoting a male agent in "tapster," "maltster"; it also survives in such proper names as Baxter (female baker) and Webster (female weaver).

479. **wafereres**: see Glossary. The "gaufre," "wafer" or waffel-cake is still a peculiar delicacy in Flanders, as English visitors to Siska's, near Knocke, or to the village *Kermesses* will gratefully remember.

483. **the Hooly Writ**: the allusion is to St. Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians v. 18: "And be not drunk with wine wherein is excess."

The Vulgate version has "*Nolite inebriari vino in quo est luxuria,*" which may have suggested Chaucer's *luxurie*, which means "wantonness"; cp. *The Parson's Tale*, I. 836: "*Sequitur de Luxuria.* After glotonye thanne comth lecherie."

488. **whoso . . . soghte**: "whoever searched the (Scripture) stories well (would discover)." The reference may be to the *Historia Scholastica* of Peter Comestor, which consisted of biblical stories. In *Piers the Plowman* Comestor is called "Clerk of the Stories," and in Lydgate "Master of the Stories."

492. **Seneca**: Lucius Annaeus (B.C. 2—A.D. 66), the Stoic philosopher and tutor to the youthful Nero. He was the son of Marcus Annaeus Seneca, a well-known rhetorician in the reigns of Augustus and Tiberius. He was best known to the Middle Ages by his moral treatises, to the men of the Renaissance by his tragedies, which greatly influenced dramatic development both in England and France. After acquiring an enormous fortune he committed suicide by Nero's orders. The *good word* Tyrwhitt finds in his 83rd Letter, where Seneca, comparing drink with madness, says that the former is shorter only: "*nunc quoque non est minor sed brevior.*"

496. **but . . . shrewe**: "except that madness befalling a wicked man."

499. **confusioun**: "confusion"; in its strongest sense "utter destruction." This sense of "confound" and "confusion" still survives in imprecations: "Confusion on thy banners wait!" (Gray, *Bard*, 2).

500. **O original**: the allusion is to the Fall of Man produced by the "gluttony" of Adam and Eve in eating the forbidden fruit. We have this thought again in *The Parson's Tale* (I. 818).

502. **deerë**. The *-ë* is the O.E. adverbial termination. See Introd., p. 34.

504. **corrupt . . . glotonye**: "this whole world became corrupt (with original sin) because of (Adam's) gluttony."

507. **it is no drede**: "there is no doubt"; cp. our modern colloquialism "no fear."

508. **as I rede**: *i.e.* in St. Jerome's treatise against Jovianus.

510. **deffended**: has here its French meaning "forbidden" and not its original Latin meaning. The former meaning, now obsolete, may be found both in Shakespeare, *e.g.* "Which God defend that I should violate," *Rich. II.*, I. iii. 18, and in Milton, *e.g.* "since his taste of that defended fruit," *P.L.*, xi. 85.

512. **oghte**: is here the pret. subj. of *owen* used impersonally—"With good reason might it behove us to complain of thee"; *us* is the dative after *oghte*.

513. **wiste**: here subjunctive—"if a man but knew."

517. **the shorte throte, the tendre mouth**: Chaucer seems here to have mistranslated his authorities. Pope Innocent, Bk. II., chap. 17 of his *De Contemptu Mundi*, has "Tam brevis est gulae voluptas," where it is the "pleasure" and not the "throat" that is "short."

521. **kanstow**: the singular personal pronoun is often joined to

the verb; cp. "artow" (552), "theech" (947), "quotha," etc. In the 2nd person *th* usually become *t*; cp. "lyvestow," 719.

522. **mete . . . mete**: "Meats for the belly and the belly too for meats; but God shall destroy both it and them" (1 Cor. vi. 13).

526. **the white and rede**: *sc.* wine.

529. **the Apostel wepyng seith**: the reference is to Philippians iii. 18.

537. **thee to fynde**: "to provide for thee." We still say "to find in food and drink."

538. **stampe**: *i.e.* with mortar and pestle.

streyne: use a colander or sieve.

539. **and turnen substaunce into accident**: *i.e.* change completely the nature of things, a humorous allusion to the terms of scholastic philosophy. According to the Realists everything possessed an *unalterable* substance distinct from such outward "accidents" as taste, colour, smell, etc., which had no real existence apart from "substance" and might be changed without injury to it.

540. **to . . . talent**: "to satisfy all thy gluttonous desires."

545. **y-maked by delit**: "made deliciously."

554. **Sampsoun**: an imitation of the stertorous breathing of a drunken man.

556. **as . . . swyn**: "like a stuck pig."

557. **honeste cure**: *i.e.* "care for honour," *lit.* "honourable care," a Latinism, *honesta cura*.

559. **wit**: a word that is found with different meanings at different periods. In O.E. *witt* means "understanding," "right senses," as here. In Shakespeare it has many meanings, *e.g.* "wisdom," "common sense," "the intellectual faculties," as well as its modern meaning. To Dryden it meant "a propriety of thoughts and words"; cp. Pope's "True wit is nature to advantage dressed, What oft was thought but ne'er so well expressed."

563. **the white wyn of Lepe**: a kind of sherry made at Lepe, near Cadiz, stronger and cheaper, as is evident from the context, than French clarets, and so used by dishonest vintners to doctor the more expensive brands. Chaucer writes here from first-hand knowledge, as his father was a Thames Street vintner. In 1364 John Penrose, for adulteration of his wine, was sentenced to stand in the pillory; worse still, he had to drink his own wine while standing there; what he could not drink was poured over his head, and he was then obliged to abandon his trade. In many ways we have much to learn from the Middle Ages.

564. **to selle**: the gerund or dative infinitive. See note on line 401. It was sometimes used, and still is, in modern English with a passive signification; cp. "a house to let."

Fysshstrete: "Fish Street," a street off Thames Street, which was the centre of the wine trade in Chaucer's London.

Chepe: Cheapside. O.E. *ceāp* meant "price," whence M.E. *chepe*, "barter," "bargain," "market"; whence the modern adjective "cheap," **short for "good cheap."**

565. **this wyn of Spaigne crepeth subtilly**: see note on 563. Chaucer pretends to explain the curious fact that Spanish wine is found mixed with dearer wines by its "subtle" habit of "creeping" into them.

566. **growynge**: a curious word to use of wines. It is presumably part of the joke contained in *crepeth*. Chaucer is writing of the wines as if they were vine-shoots.

570. **he is in Spaigne**: he is drunk, and not "French" drunk, as he supposes, but "Spanish" drunk, with his brain overpowered by the fumes of the strong Spanish wine used as an adulterant.

571. **the Rochele, Burdeux toun**: La Rochelle and Bordeaux, whence the lighter clarets come.

574. **the sovereyn actes**: "the supreme achievements."

579. **Attilla, the grete conquerour**: Attila (A.D. 406? to 453), the great King of the Huns, who extended his dominions from the Rhine to the Chinese frontiers and devastated all the country between the Black Sea and the Mediterranean. As his series of unbroken successes was regarded as a judgment on the lax lives of Christians, he was called "The Scourge of God." His army was at length almost annihilated at Châlons-sur-Marne, 451 A.D., in one of the bloodiest battles in the world's history. Here at first he carried all before him against the allied armies of Romans under Aetius and Visigoths under King Theodoric, who was killed. But Thorismund, the dead king's son, charged furiously from the heights and the Huns were routed on every side. Next year Attila again overran Italy. He is said to have died in 453 through the breaking of a blood-vessel as the result of a debauch, hence the allusion here, although another tradition records that he was assassinated by his wife.

583. **and . . . wel**: "and in addition to this consider right well," etc.

avyseth yow: imperative and reflexive in imitation of the French *s'aviser*.

584. **Lamuel**: King Lamuel mentioned in Proverbs xxxi., which in the Vulgate is headed "*Verba Lamuelis Regis, Visio qua erudivit eum mater sua*"—The words of King Lamuel, The Vision by which his mother instructed him.

586. **redeth . . . fynde**: are both imperatives.

587. **of wyn-yevyng to hem that han justise**: the allusion is to Proverbs xxxi. 5, "Lest they (princes) drink, and forget the law, and pervert the judgment of any of the afflicted."

589. **yspoke**: the *n* of the participial ending is dropped; see note on *wasshe*, 353.

590. **deffenden hasardrye**: "forbid dicing"; see note on line 510. Hasard was a game at dice as popular in Chaucer's day as during the Regency of George, Prince of Wales, afterwards George IV.

593. **blaspheme**: the Ellesmere MS. reads *blasphemyng*, which will not scan. *Blaspheme* is the O.F. form of *blasphemy*, a doublet of which was *blasme*, from which we get our *blame*.

594. **catel**: "chattels" or "money."

595. **it is repreeve**: "it is a reproof."

599. **if that . . . policye**: "if a prince practises dicing, amongst all governments and polities he is considered," etc.

600. **governaunce and policye**: abstract for concrete.

603. **Stilbon**: "John of Salisbury, from whom our author probably took this story and the following, calls him Chilon. 'Chilon the Lacedaemonian being sent to Corinth to treat for an alliance found the chiefs and elders of the people playing at hasard. He returned therefore without transacting his business'" (Tyrwhitt). John of Salisbury, secretary of St. Thomas à Becket, was the author of *Polycraticus sive De Nugis Curialium*, a satire on the vices of courts, and in favour of à Becket against the King. He is one of Chaucer's favourite authors, but here as elsewhere Chaucer appears to be quoting from memory.

605. **hire alliaunce**: alliance with them. *Hire* (O.E. *hira, heora*) is gen. plur.

608. **pleyynge . . . fond**: scan: Pléy | yng' át | te hás | ard hé | hem fónd. Even so it is an unsatisfactory line. *Atte*, contraction of "at the"; cp. Stratford-attë-Bowe.

609. **for which**: "wherefore"; Chaucer is versifying the extract from John of Salisbury given partly in note on 603 above.

622. **the book**: *i.e.* John of Salisbury's *Polycraticus*.

627. **oother maner pley**: "play of another kind." The word *maner* is French, but the construction is an imitation of that of *kynes* in M.E., especially in *alles-kynës*, "of every kind"; cp. "the ende of alle-kynez flesch" in the contemporary West Midland Alliterative Poem *Cleanness*, and in the *Man of Law's Tale* (B. 519), "A maner Latyn corrupt was hir speche."

634. **witnesse on Mathew**, etc.: St. Matthew v. 34, Jeremiah iv. 2.

639. **the firste table**: the tradition concerning the two tables on which the Ten Commandments were written is that on the first was inscribed our duties to God; on the second our duties to man.

641. **the seconde heeste**: the Second Commandment of the Vulgate and Wyclif is the Third in later Protestant versions. In other words, the Protestants make two commandments out of the Vulgate first, the Vulgate two out of the tenth commandment of later versions.

643. **rather he**, etc.: *i.e.* swearing is forbidden before homicide; the Commandment against it comes first.

646. **this knowen**: the antecedent of *that* and subject of *knowen* is understood.

649. **that vengeance . . . hous**: a reference to Ecclesiasticus xxiii. 11: "A man that useth much swearing shall be filled with iniquity, and the plague shall never depart from his house."

651. **by his nayles**: *i.e.* the nails that fastened Him to the Cross. These were said to have been found by St. Helena at Jerusalem after her discovery of the Cross, and were fashioned into a bit for

the horse of her son Constantine. *By his nayles* became "Snails!" just as "Sblood" and "Zounds" came from "by His blood" and "by His wounds" respectively.

652. **Hayles**: the abbey of Hailes in Gloucestershire, where was preserved and venerated what was said to be a small portion of the Blood of Christ. This made Hailes a great resort of pilgrims, as is Bruges to-day for the same reason.

653. **sevene is my chaunce**: the whole passage is meant to illustrate how gambling causes anger, blasphemy, and even homicide. *Chaunce* is a technical term from the game of Hasard: "if I throw a seven the stakes are mine, if a five and a three fall they are yours."

656. **the bicched bones two**: "the cursed pair of dice." "Bicched" has long been a *crux*, though most commentators have connected it with "bitch" (O.E. *bicce*). In the *New English Dictionary* instances are given both of its use generally and of its special use in reference to dice: e.g. *Towneley Myst.*, 241, "The byched bones that ye be, I byd you go bett!" where they are casting dice for Our Lord's vesture. By an article in *Mod. Lang. Notes*, Vol. XXIII., Nos. 4 and 5, the derivation of "bicched" has been placed beyond doubt. It quotes from the *Speculum Morale*: "*Plus defert honoris tribus ossibus caninis* id est deciis *quam ossibus dei*" (He pays more honour to the three dog-bones, *i.e.* dice, than to the bones of God). In the *Promptorium Parvulorum*, *caninus* is glossed "doggyd," and hence why not "bicched" in jest or imprecation? In the Middle Ages, as in Classical times, the *ace* was called "canis" or dog, and dice may be called dog-bones from this, or from their actually being made of the bones of dogs.

659. **lete**: other MSS. have "leueth." Both are imperatives and the meaning is the same: "leave," "give up." "Lete" means also "to allow" < O.E. *lǣtan*.

662. **prime**: "a canonical hour of the Divine Office appointed for the first hour of the day, beginning originally at 6 a.m. but sometimes at sunrise." "One of the *horae parvae* or 'Little Hours' (prime, tierce, sext, none, and compline) as distinguished from the 'Greater Hours' (lauds and vespers)," *New English Dictionary*. *Prime* gradually came to be used loosely for any time between 6 and 9 a.m.

663. **hem**: a retained reflexive object after "were set." Our colloquial *'em*, e.g. "Give 'em me," is all that survives of the old dat. pl. of "he, she, it." By Chaucer's time "them" and "hem" were being used as Accusatives.

665. **Biforn a cors was caried to his grave**: the omission of the nom. relative common in Shakespeare as well as in Chaucer is tolerated now only in the archaic language of proverbs or poetry, *e.g.* "'Tis distance lends enchantment to the view."

666. **knave**: "boy" or "servant," now deteriorated in meaning. Mod. Germ. *knabe* preserves the older meaning, which is also found in our "knave" of cards (Fr. *valet*).

667. **go bet**: "go quicker"; cp. the quotation from *The Towneley Mysteries* cited in note 656: *bet* < O.E. *bet*, compar. adv.

axe: "ask"; *axe*, now a vulgar provincialism, is etymologically as correct a form as "ask," O.E. *ācsian* being a metathesis of *ascian*, to ask; cp. "wasp" and "wops."

674. **for-dronke, as . . . upright**: "as upon his bench he sat up very drunk." Note, however, that "upright" has often the meaning of "face upwards" in Chaucer; cp. *K. T.*, 2008, "gaping upright," also *N. P. T.*, 4232, and it is found with this meaning in an O.E. glossary; cp. *Romaunt of the Rose*, 1604, "that made him swithe to lie *upright*," i.e. "on his back" or "dead." "Sit," too, is used loosely, e.g. *The Book of the Duchesse*, 106, "But doun on knees she *sat* anoun," *i.e.* "knelt." This passage has been explained to mean that the drunken man was lying flat on his back. But Chaucer does use "upright" in its modern sense, while this interpretation would unnecessarily strain the meaning of "sit." In justification of the paraphrase here adopted cp. *The Book of the Duchesse*, 451, "Than fond I sitte even upright," with its context, "that sat and had yturned his bak, To an oke."

684. **my dame**: "my mother."

685. **Seinte**: possibly *-ë* according to Rule (v), Introd., p. 34, in which case *Marie* is a dissyllable. Chaucer, however, makes this adj. a monosyllable or dissyllable as suits his metre.

690. **to been avysed . . . were**: "it would be great wisdom to take precautions."

695. **I make avow**: cp. *Man of Law's Tale*, 334:—

"But oon avow to gretë God I heete."

This will prevent the unnecessary emendation to "a vow."

698. **and ech . . . brother**: the allusion is to the medieval "*fratres jurati*" or "sworn brothers" who bound themselves by an oath to share one another's fortunes in danger; cp. line 704 and Shakespeare's *Much Ado*, I. i. 72, "Who is his companion now? He hath every month a new sworn brother."

705. **al dronken**: the Ellesmere MS. reads *and dronken*, in which case *dronken* would be past. ind. pl. and not pp.

rage: "mad passion," Lat. *rabiem*.

715. **God yow see!**: a common salutation: "May God look on you with mercy"; "God bless you!"

717. **what carl . . . face**: "hallo, you ugly yokel! Why are you all, except your face, wrapped up?" For *sorry* cp. *Macbeth*, II. ii. 21: "This is a sorry sight!"

720. **this olde man**: an interesting suggestion has been made that the old man is the Wandering Jew. There is nothing, however, in the text to warrant this supposition, but on the contrary it would seem to destroy part of the poetry of the passage, where so strong a contrast is drawn between reckless Youth longing for life yet finding death, and Old Age seeking death in vain. Note that

the old man does not say that he has walked into India, but that, even if he did so, he would find no one to "exchange his youth for my age." These last words look like a reference to some folk story in which such a change is spoken of as possible. One feels that the Wandering Jew story would have exercised so strong a fascination upon Chaucer's dramatic power that he would not have dismissed it with the merest hint. In the Italian Tale the old man is a hermit who is afraid of death (see Introd., p. 29); the change here seems due to the artistry of Chaucer.

725. **stille**: "always," as in Shakespeare: cp. "The still vexed Bermoothes," *Tempest*, I. ii. 229.

729. **and on the ground . . . lest me in**: Professor Kittredge points out that these beautiful lines are a close imitation of Maximian, Elegy, I. 224 fol.

my moodres gate: because the Earth is the mother of us all. Maximian has:

> "*Suscipe me, genetrix, nati miserere laborum:*
> *Membra velis gremio fessa fovere tuo.*"
>
> ("Take me, then, O my mother, and pity the toils of thy offspring,
> And in thy bosom deign cherish my frail worn limbs!")

732. **vanysshe**: "waste away."

734. **chaunge my cheste**: "change my chest," i.e. the clothes that I have in my chest; cp. our modern use of "wardrobe" in both senses. This is an example of the figure called metonymy.

736. **an heyre-clowt**: "a hair-cloth shroud."

742. **Hooly Writ**: see Leviticus xix. 32: "Thou shalt rise up before the hoary head, and honour the face of the old man."

748. **where ye go**: "wherever you may walk." *Wher* might be read and would be a contraction of "whether," cp. *K. T.*, A. 1101: "I noot wher she be womman or goddesse."

749. **thider as**: "thither whither"; *as* was used loosely in M.E. as a general correlative.

750. **olde**: the rounded *e* of the vocative, Introd., p. 34; cp. the scansion of lines 713 and 714 with the scansion of this line.

752. **thou partest nat so lightly**: "you do not get off so easily."

755. **have heer . . . abye**: "since you are a spy of his, tell us where he is, or, believe my word, you shall pay for it."

758. **oon of his assent**: "one of those who favour him."

759. **yonge**: pl. adj.

false: voc. adj., Introd., p. 34.

760. **if that yow be so leef**: "if it be so dear to you." *Ye* is the ungrammatical reading of a number of MSS. for the correct dative form "yow" found in the Ellesmere. There is a confusion between two constructions, the personal "to have leef," and the impersonal "to be leef."

766. **boghte agayn**: "redeemed."

770. **of floryns fyne . . . rounde**: "of fine round florins coined of gold." The florin was originally a gold coin worth about 6*s.* 8*d.*,

so called from being minted first at Florence. It was not an English coin in Chaucer's day. The present value would be about £3 6s. 8d.

778. **I bourde and pleye**: "I jest and sport"; *play* in M.E. had a much wider signification than it has now.

779. **this tresor hath Fortune**: inversion of the subject.

781. **lightly as it comth**: proverbial; cp. our "Lightly come, lightly go!" and the French, "*Ce qui vient de la flûte s'en retourne au tambour.*"

790. **doon us honge**: "make us hang." "Do" in M.E. was used, as "make" is to-day, as a causative.

793. **wherfor I rede that Cut . . . be drawe**: "wherefore I advise that lots be drawn among us all"; a reference to the time-honoured way still practised among school-children of deciding who is to be "it" by drawing straws of unequal length held in the closed hand (*fest* in line 802). The short straw is called the *Cut*, which is derived from the Welsh word for "short." This derivation then would seem to indicate that the Saxons learnt the custom from their Welsh slaves; cp. Prologue, lines 835 fol.

798. **shul kepen subtilly**: shall guard carefully.

802. **that oon of hem . . . fest**: "the particular one just mentioned, *i.e.* the worst of them, brought the short straw in his fist." *That* grammatically in O.E. is the neut. of *se*, "the" or "that": it was first used for all three genders in the Northern dialects of Middle English and gradually supplanted the older "thilke"; this use spread to the South, as did the use of its new plural "thos(e)," O.E. *þās*, really the plural of "this," O.E. *þis*.

fest: is a Kentish form: W.S. *fȳst* = Mercian *fīst*; Kentish *fēst*. Chaucer avails himself of Kentish forms for the sake of rhyme. Note in Chaucer's biography in the Introduction the poet's connection with Kent (1386).

806. **al so soone as that**: "just as soon as." Note that *al so* is etymologically the same as *as* < *als* < *al so*. There is no necessity to read *agon* for the sake of the metre, as *soone* (O.E. *sōna*) etymologically is a dissyllable. Scan:

"And ál | so soón- | e ás | that hé | was gón."

807. **that oother**: "the other"; see note on line 802. *That other* was changed into "the tother," still heard in the provinces.

808. **sworn(e)**: the Ellesmere MS. reads *sworn*, which can be scanned only by adding the adjectival *e* as indicated in the text.

809. **thy profit . . . anon**: "I intend to tell you at once of something which will profit you."

812. **departed**: "divided." This was the original word in the Marriage Service—"till death us depart," which through misunderstanding was altered into "till death us do part."

816. **noot**: contraction of *ne woot*, "do not know." This in some MSS. is spelt *not*, which survives, perhaps, in the phrase "and what not" (Lat. *nescio quid*; Fr. *je ne sais quoi*).

819. **shal it be conseil ?** : "shall it be a secret ?"

821. **what . . . aboute** : if the Ellesmere *bryngen* is correct, the *e* of *bryngen* must be slurred.

822. **I graunte . . . biwreye** : "without hesitation I pledge myself upon my word of honour not to betray thee."

823. **biwreye** : literally "reveal," will be remembered best from the words of the Gospel (A.V.), "Surely thou also art one of them ; for thy speech bewrayeth thee" (St. Matt. xxvi. 13).

833. **thanne . . . fulfille** : "then may we both fulfil all our desires." *Lust* (O.E. *lust*) had no specially bad meaning in M.E.

838. **he rolleth up and doun** : "he revolves," "meditates upon."

842. **lyveth** : must be scanned *lyv(e)th.*

under the trone of God : "under the heavens" ; a Biblical phrase : cp. St. Matthew v. 34.

847. **for why** : "because."

854. **quelle** : "kill" ; "quell," meaning to kill, survived in the speech of the lower orders till Shakespeare's day ; cp. Bottom's "Quail, crush, conclude and quell" ; and Mrs. Quickly's "manqueller."

855. **hawe** : "hedge," or possibly "yard." There were three different forms in O.E. for "hedge," which well illustrate the working out of phonetic change from O.E. to M.E. : *haga* > "hawe," as here, and in "haw-thorn" shows the formation of the new diphthong *aw* (au) ; *hæg-* > "hay," "hei," as in "hei-ward" (*Ancren Riwle*) and in place names like *Roundhays*, illustrates the formation of the new diphthong *ay* (ai) ; *hege* > "hedge," shows the influence of palatalisation.

857. **and fayn . . . nyghte** : "And he would like to avenge himself, if he could, on vermin that worked destruction on his property by night." *Fayn*, from O.E. *fægen*, is an instance of the formation of a new diphthong ; *him* dative of disadvantage.

860. **al so** : "as" ; see note on line 806.

862. **that . . . confiture** : scan :

"That ét(e)n | or drónk(e)n | hath óf | this cón | fitúre."

863. **noght . . . whete** : "only the amount of a grain of wheat."

865. **sterve** : "die." *Steorfan* (our "starve") was the regular word in O.E. for "to die." In the North and Midlands people speak of "starving of cold," but of "clemming of hunger."

866. **goon a-paas** : "walk." *Apace* in Chaucer implies "slowly," "at a walking pace," and not "quickly," the meaning it gradually obtained. The *a* is probably the article and *paas* the cognate object.

871. **hym** : "for himself."

boteles : cp. the scansion of *boteles* in this line with that of *botels* in line 877. The Ellesmere has *botels* in both lines, but *botelles* is read by many MSS. in the former.

873. **clene** : if *owene* be read with the Ellesmere MS. in this line *clene* is an adjective and a monosyllable ; if *owene* be omitted as in

other good MSS. then *clene* must be scanned as two syllables, and must be the adverb meaning "entirely."

874. **he shoope him**: *lit.* "he shaped for himself," *i.e.* he intended. "Shape" was a strong verb in O.E.: *scieppan, scōp, scōpon, sceapen.*

875. **in cariynge**: by Chaucer's day the O.E. gerund form in *-anne* was confused with the present participle form in *-ing(e)* < *-end(e)*, hence the difficulty we often feel to-day in parsing *-ing* forms. See the note on 401.

876. **with sory grace**: "disgracefully," "villainously." Note the different meaning of this phrase in line 717.

880. **cast . . . bifoore**: "planned beforehand."

887. **and drank**: omission of pronominal subject where it is easily supplied from the context.

889. **Avycen wroot never in no Canon, ne in no Fen**: Avicenna, "the Arab Hippocrates," an Arabian physician and astronomer of the late tenth and early eleventh century. His great work was *The Canon of Medicine*, which is divided into various sections called "fen" in the original Arabic. Gascoigne (d. 1577) calls him "King Avicen," and adds,

> "Yet was his glory never set on shelf,
> Nor never shall, whiles any world may stand,
> Where men have mind to take good books in hand."

891. **wonder signes**: "strange signs"; a noun used as an adjective. *Wonder* is used freely by Chaucer as an adj. or an adv.; cp. "Me thynketh that it were a wonder dede" (*Second Nun's Tale*, G. 308), and "We semen wonder wise" (*Canon Yeoman's Tale*, G. 751). The adjectival use comes from the O.E. use of *wundor-* as a prefix to form compound nouns: e.g. *wundor-tācen* = "wonder signs"; the adverbial use from the old dat. pl. *wundrum*; cp. Ger. *wunderschön.*

895. **O cursed synne**; the Ellesmere MS. has *Auctor* here in the margin to show that this passage is a parenthesis by the author and not part of the Pardoner's sermon.

896. **traytours**: is the reading of the Ellesmere MS., and is another spelling of the adjective "traitorous."

897. **O glotonye**, etc.: scan "O glót(o) | nye lúx | uríe | and hás | ardrýe."

luxurie: "lust"; see note on line 483.

899. **and othes grete, of usage and of pride**: for the meaning cp. *Parson's Tale*, I. 600: "What seye we eek of hem that deliten hem in sweryng and holden it a gentrie or a manly dede to swere grete othes?" That is swearing "of pride." "And what of hem that of verray usage ne cesse nat to swere grete othes, al be the cause nat worth a straw." That is swearing "of usage."

906. **myn hooly pardoun . . . warice**: "my holy absolution can cure you all," *sc.* of avarice. *Warice* is the French *guérir* (*gueriss-*), just as our "war" and "ward" represent *guerre* and *garde* respectively.

907. **nobles**: gold coins worth nominally 6s. 8d., or half a mark each, said to have been first coined by Edward III. In our money a "noble" of Chaucer's day would be worth £3 6s. 8d.

sterlynges: "sterling silver pennies"; cp. "Certain merchants of Norwaie, Denmarke, and of other these parties, called . . . Easterlings because they be cast in respect of us" (Holinshed). Their money was in great repute because of its purity, and Camden tells us that certain of these Easterlings were brought over to England to rectify the minting of English money, whence standard English money is known as "sterling."

910. **com . . . offreth**: here we get the two forms of the imperative plural; see Introd., p. 40.

wyves: in O.E. and M.E. often meant, as here, "women." Cp. modern "fishwives," "housewives." The ending shows how by Chaucer's time natural gender had been substituted for grammatical gender; *wīf* in O.E., like *Weib* in Mod. Germ., was neuter and the pl. was *wīf*.

923. **if any of yow . . .**: scan "If á | ny of yów | wole óf | devó cióun."

wole: pres. subj. of *willen*.

929. **newe and newe**: "ever anew."

932. **a suffisant Pardoneer**: "a Pardoner who is able."

933. **tassoille**: "t'assoille," "to assoille," "to absolve." "Assoil" stands to "absolve" in the same relation as "frail" to "fragile," the first being the popular French corruption, the second the learned Latin form.

934. **aventures**: "accidents."

935. **paraventure . . .**: scan "Par(a)vén | ture thér | may fáll | en oón | or twó."

937. **which**: in its etymological meaning "of what kind," "what."

939. **bothe moore and lasse**: "both those of high degree and those of low."

946. **have I**: "may I have!" pres. subj.

947. **theech**: "may I thrive!" a contraction of *thee ich*, where *thee* is the pres. subj. of *theen* (O.E. *þeon*), to thrive, while *ich* is the Southern form of the pronoun of the first person. See note on line 521.

948. **breech**: "breeches," which is really a double plural just as "feets" would be: O.E. *brōc*, pl. *brēc*; "breech(es)" is the Southern palatalised form and "breeks" the Northern; cp. "bridge" and "brigg," "church" and "kirk," "Caistor" and "Chester."

962. **right ynough**: "quite enough."

963. **myrie of cheere**: "merry of face." This is the older meaning of the Norman-French word *chere*; cp. in *Floris and Blauncheflur*: "The Admiral . . . he chaunged his chere." From "good cheer," signifying a smiling face of hospitality, the word passed to its modern signification of concrete hospitality. *Mery* is a Kentish form: O.E. *myrge*; M.E. Northern, *myrie*; Southern, *müry*; Kentish, *mery*; cp. "fest" in line 802.

GLOSSARY.

ABBREVIATIONS USED IN THE GLOSSARY.

acc.	= accusative	Mn.E.	= Modern English
A.F.	= Anglo-French	num.	= numeral
A.S.	= Anglo-Saxon	O.F.	= Old French
adj.	= adjective	O.H.G.	= Old High German
adv	= adverb	O.Ir.	= Old Irish
Arab.	= Arabic	O. Merc.	= Old Mercian
C.	= Celtic	onom.	= onomatopoetic
cf.	= compare	O. North.	= Old Northumbrian
cog.	= cognate	orig.	= original, originally
comp.	= comparative	O.S.	= Old Saxon
Dan.	= Danish	pass.	= passive
dat.	= dative	pers., pr.	= person
dem.	= demonstrative	pp.	= preterite participle
dim., dimin.	= diminutive	prep.	= preposition
Du.	= Dutch	pres.	= present
F.	= French	pret.	= preterite
f.	= feminine	pron.	= pronoun
fr.	= from	Prov.	= Provençal (old)
Fris.	= Frisian	ptc.	= participle
G.	= modern German	ptc. pr., pr. ptc.	= present participle
Gr.	= Greek	reflex.	= reflexive
Ic., Icel.	= Icelandic (old)	rel.	= relative
imper., imperat.	= imperative	sb.	= substantive
ind., indic.	= indicative	Scand.	= Scandinavian
inf.	= infinitive	sg.	= singular
influ.	= influence of	Skt.	= Sanskrit
interr.	= interrogative	str.	= strong
It.	= Italian	supl.	= superlative
L.	= Latin	Swed., Sw.	= Swedish
lit.	= literally	Teut.	= Teutonic
L.L.	= Late Latin	v.	= *vide*, see
m.	= masculine	v. i.	= verb intransitive
M.E.	= Middle English	v. t.	= verb transitive
Merc.	= Mercian	w.	= weak
M.H.G.	= Middle High German		

SIGNS.

[ ] derivation, or reference to cognates, is given within [ ].
* denotes hypothetical form assumed according to phonetic principles
\+ compounded with.
? probably, possibly.

A.

a: prep. [O.E. on], *on*.

abye: vb. [O.E. ā-bycgan], *pay for*, 756; pp., aboght, 503.

acorded: pp. [Lat. ad cordem, O.F. acorder, *agree*], *agreed*, 835

agayn: prep. [O.E. ā gēn < ā + gegn], *against*, 427.

agayns: prep. [= agayn + adv. suffix -es], *in presence of*, 743.

agoon: pp. of ago [O.E. ā-gān].

al: adj. plu. alle, 336 [Merc.

al, *all*], *all*, 332; adv. *entirely*, 718; conj. *although*, 449, 451.

al day: *always*, 294.

al so: adv. [O.E. al + swā], *so*, 860.

algate: adv. [al + O North gat *way*, cp. Ic. gata], *in any case, at any rate*, 292.

alle and some: *every one*, 336.

alwey: adv. [al + O.E. weg], *always*, 333.

anon: adv. [O.E. on *in* + ān *one*], *at once*, 316, 319, etc.

a-paas: adv. [indef. art. + Fr. pas < Lat. passus, *a step*], *slowly, at an ordinary pace*, 866.

artow: *art thou*, 552, 718.

as: adv. and conj. [O.E. al swā > M.E. als, as], *as if*, 287.

assent: sb. [O.Fr. assent < Lat. ad, sentire], *agreement*, 758.

assoille: vb. [O.Fr. assoille < Lat. ab, solvo], *absolve*, 387, 913.

asterte: vb. [+ O.E. ā, styrian: cp. steart-lian], *escape*, 414.

atte: *at the*, 608.

atwo: adv. *in two*, 677, 936.

auctoritee: sb. [Lat. auctoritatem], *authority*, 387.

aventures: sb. [Fr. aventure < Lat. ad, ventura], *accidents*, 934.

avow: sb. [Fr. avœu < Lat. ad, vovere], *declaration*: make avow = *declare*, 695.

avyse: vb. [Fr. aviser < Lat. ad, visum], *forewarn*; pp. avysed, *forewarned*, 690; avyseth yow, imper. [Fr. s'aviser], *pay attention to*, 583.

axe: v.t. [O.E. acsian = ascian], *ask*, 667.

ay: adv. [Icel. ei], *ever*, 581.

B.

beel amy: [Fr. bel ami], *good fellow*, 318.

bekke: v.i. [+ O.E. bīec-nian, *nod*; cp. Mn.E. beacon], *move the head to and fro*, 396.

be(n): vb. [O.E. beon], 2 pers. sing. pres. ind. *artow* (*art thou*), 552; 3 pers. pl. pres. ind. *been*, 296, 349; imper. pl. *beth*, 683; 3 pers. sing. pret. subj. *were*, 681, 690, 814; *be*.

berne: sb. [O.E. bere, *barley* + ærn, *house*], *barn*, 397.

bet: adv. comp. [O.E. bet, Mn.E. bett-er], *more quickly* (literally *better*), 667.

beth: see be(n).

beye: v.t. [O.E. bycgan, bōhte], pres. inf. 845; pret. ind. boghte, 902; pp. boght, 501; *buy*.

bicched bones: *bitched bones*, i.e. *cursed dice*, 656.

bicomen: v.i., pres. inf., 698, *become*.

biforn: prep. [O.E. be-foran], *before*, 665.

bisynesse: sb. [O.E. bisig, *busy*, + -nes], *hard work, industry*, 399.

biwreye: v.t. [O.E. bewrēon, *cover up*, changing in meaning in M.E.], *betray*, 823.

blakeberied (a): *a-blackberrying*, 406.

blaspheme: v.i. [O.F. blaspheme < L.L. blasphemia < Gk.

βλασφημία < *βλας-* *evil*, *φημί* *say*], *blasphemy*, 593.

blissed : pp. [O.E. bletsian], *blessed*, 474.

boon : sb. [O.E. bān], *bone*, 350.

boost : sb. [cp. Germ. bausen, *swell* ; Sw. pusta, blow], *boast*, 764.

borwed : pp. [O.E. borgian], *borrowed*, 871.

bourde : sb. [O.F. bourde], *jest*, 778.

boyste : sb. [O.F. boiste > Fr. boîte : Lat. bux-us], *box*, 307.

breech : sb. [O.E. brēc, pl. of brōc], *breeches*, 948.

bulles : sb. [Lat. bulla, *bubble*, L.L. a papal bull], *bulls of popes*, 336, *of other prelates*, 342.

but : conj. [O.E. but on < be ūtan], *unless*, 314, 316, 741.

C.

cake : sb. [Ic. kaka, cp. Germ. kuchen], *a loaf*, 322.

capouns : sb. [O.E. capūn, Lat. capo, Gk. *καπών* + *κόπτειν*, to cut], *capons, cockerels prepared for table use*, 856.

cardynacle : sb. = cardiacle [Gk. *καρδιακός* < *καρδία*, *heart* > Lat. cardiacus, O.F. cardiaque, the *l* being intrusive], *heartburn*, 313.

carl : sb. [O.E. carl, *man, peasant* ; cp. Ic. karl-köttr, *a tom-cat* ; and Eng. Charles, Germ. Karl], *fellow, yokel*, 717.

cast : pp. [Ic. kasta, *throw*], *resolved, designed* (cp. forecast), 880.

catel : sb. [O.F. catel < Lat. capitale, *property counted by the head, cattle*], *chattels, money*, 594.

cause, by : *because*, 446.

certes : adv. [Fr. certes < Lat. cert-us], *certainly*, 407.

cheere : sb. [O.Fr. chiere < L.L. cara, *face* < Gr. *κάρα*, *head*], *countenance*, 963.

cherl : sb. [O.E. ceorl = carl, above], *fellow, churl*, 289.

clepeth : vb. [O.E. cleopian, *call*], 3 pl. pres. ind. of clepe(n), *call*, 675.

clerk : sb. [Fr. clerc < Lat. cleric-us < Gk. *κληρικ-ός* < *κλῆρος*, *lot*, in late Greek applied to the clergy, whose lot was the Lord, cp. Deut. xviii. 2, 1 Peter v. 3], *a cleric*, 339 ; *a man of learning*, 391.

cloutes : sb. [O.E. clūt, *patch*, probably from British], *rags*, 348.

cod : sb. [O.E. codd, *bag*, cp. *peas-cod*], *belly*, 534.

cokewold : sb. [O.F. coucoul, a cuckoo, Lat. cuculus, with intrusive *d*), *the husband of a faithless wife*, 382.

commune : adj. [O.F. commun < Lat. communis], *common*, 596.

confiture : sb. [O.F. confiture < Lat. confectura], *preparation*, 862.

confusioun : sb. [O.F. confusion < Lat. confusionem], *utter destruction*, 499.

conseil: sb. [Lat. consilium], *secret counsel*, 561, 819.

corn: sb. [O.E. corn, *grain*], *a grain*, 863.

corny: adj., *full of the grain* or *barley-corn*, what we call *humming* ale, 315, 456.

corpus: sb. [Lat. corpus Domini], the Lord's body, 314.

cors: sb. [O.F. cors < Lat. corpus], *body* (living), 304; (dead) 665.

coveityse: sb. [O.Fr. coveitise < Lat. cupidus, *desirous*], *covetousness*, 424.

croys: sb. [O.Fr. crois < Lat. crucem], *cross*, 532.

cure: sb. [Lat. cura], *care*, 557.

curs: sb. [O.E. curs], *curse*, 946.

cursednesse: sb., *accursed sin*, *wickedness*, 400.

cut: sb. [Welsh cwta, bobtailed, whence our coot], *the short straw*, 793.

cynk: num. [O.F. cink < Lat. quinque], the *cink* or *five* on dice, 653.

D.

dar: vb. [O.E. dearr], 1 pers. pres. ind., 297; 3 pers. pres. ind., 380; *dare*.

debate: vb. [O.F. debatre], *to attack*, 412.

deed: adj. [O.E. dēad], *dead*, 548.

deere: adv. [O.E. dēore], *dearly*, 293, 502.

dees: sb. [O.F. det, pl. dez, L.L. decia, Lat. datum], *dice*, 834.

defame: sb. [O.F. defamer, *defame* < Lat. fama], *dishonour*, 612.

defaute: sb. [O.F. defaute < Lat. falsitas], *default*, *fault*, *sin*, 370.

def(f)ende: vb. [Fr. défendre, *forbid*], *forbid*, 590; pp. deffended, *forbidden*, 510.

delices: sb. [O.Fr. delices < Lat. deliciae, *dainties*], *delicacies*, 547.

delit: sb. [Lat. delectare], *delight*; by delit = *deliciously*, 545.

departed: pp. [O.Fr. departer < Lat. partem, *part*], *divided*, 812.

destroyed: pret. [O.Fr. destroyer < Lat. de-struere], *caused havoc*, 858.

devyse: vb. [O.Fr. deviser < Lat. di-visum], *invent*, *devise*, 290; *explain*, 423.

digne: adj. [O.Fr. digne < Lat. dign-us], *venerable*, 695.

displesaunces: sb. [O.Fr. displesance < Lat. plac-ere], *things that displease*, 420.

distourbe (of): v.t. [O.Fr. desturber < Lat. dis-turbare], *disturb in*, 340

doom: sb. [O.E. dōm, *judgment*], *justice*, 637.

doon: vb. [O.E. dōn, *to do*], pres. inf. doon used causatively, 790; 2 pers. sing. pres. ind. doost, 312; 3 pers. sing. pres. ind. dooth, 397; imper. dooth, 395; 3 pl. pres. ind. doon, 320.

dowve: sb. [O.E. dūfa, *a diver*, O.E. dūfan, *to dive*; cp. Ger. taube, *a dove*, and taufen, *to dip*], *pigeon*, 397.

drede: sb. [O.E. -drǣdan, *dread*], *doubt*, 507.

dronke: pp. [O.E. gedruncen], *drunk*, 456.

dronkelewe: adj. [O.E. drunken + ? M.E. lewe, warm or hot; cp. lew-warm, which has no connection with luke-warm], *sodden with drink*, 495.

dyde: vb. pret. of dye(n) [cp. Ic. deyja] or deye(n), *die*, *died*, 658.

E.

ech: adj. [O.E. ælc < a-ge-lic], *each*, 697.

echoon: *each one*, 349.

eek: adv. [O.E. ēac], *also*, 306.

eet: vb. 510; see ete(n).

eir: sb. [Fr. air < Lat. aër < Gk. ἀήρ], *air*, 519.

elles: adv. [O.E. elles, cog. of Gr. ἄλλος, L. alius], *else*, 315.

embassadour: sb. [O.F. embassadeur, cp. Goth. andbahts, *servant*; O.H.G. ambaht], *ambassador*, 603.

empoisonying: sb. [O.F. empoisonner < Lat. potionem, *a draught*], *poisoning*, 891.

empoysonere, 894 = *poisoner*.

ensamples: sb. [corruption of O.F. example < Lat. exemplum], *examples*, 435.

entencioun: sb. [O.F. entencion < Lat. intentionem], *intention*, 408.

entente: sb. [O.F. entente < Lat. intentum], *intention*, 403, 849.

envoluped: pp. [O.Fr. envoluper], *enveloped*, 942.

er: conj. [O.E. ǣr], *before*, 362, 671, etc.

erme: vb. [O.E. earmian, *pity* < earm, *miserable*], *to grieve*, 312.

erst: adv. [O.E. ǣrest (first) superl. of ǣr], erst er, *before*, 662.

espye: sb. [O.F. espier, *spy* < O.H.G. spehōn, cp. Lat. specere], *spy*, 755.

est: adv. [O.E. ēast], *east*, 396.

ete(n): vb.i. and t. [O.E. etan, ǣt, ǣton, -eten]; pres. inf. *eten*, 322; 3 pers. sing. pret. ind. *eet*, 510; pp. ete (*bitten*), 355 *to eat*.

everich: pron. [O.E. ǣfre, *ever* + ælc, *each* > every], *every one*, 768.

everychon: pron., *every one*, 944.

ey: interjection, *Eh!* 782.

F.

falle: v.i. pret. sing. fil, 804; plu. fillen; pret. subj. fille, fillen; pp. fallen, falle, 367 [O.E. feallan, pret. s. feoll, plu. feollon, pp. feallen], *fall*.

fame: sb. [O.F. fame, Lat. fama < fari, *speak*], *report whether for good or evil; evil report*, 385.

faste: adv. [O.E. fæste], *close*, 566.

felawe: sb. [Ic. fēlagi], *fellow*, *companion*, 672.

Fen: sb., Arabic name for a division of *The Canon* of Avicenna, 890.

fest: sb. [O.E. fȳst], a Kentish form, *fist*, 802.

fetys: adj. [O.F. adj. faitis < faire, *to make*], *well made*, 478.

fey: sb. [O.F. fei < Lat. fides], *faith*, 762.

fil: v. falle.

folweth: 3 sing. and **folwen**: 3 pl. pres. ind. of folwe, v.i. [O.E. folgian], *follow*, 514, etc.

folye: sb. [O.F. folie, Lat. pl. folles, *cheeks puffed out*], *folly, foolish practices*, 464.

fond, foond: v. fynde.

for: [O.E. for], prep. *because of*, 433; for to = *in order to*, 346; conj. *because*, 440, 443.

forby: adv. *along*, 668.

fordronke: adj. [O.E. intensive particle for + droncen], *very drunk*, 674.

forlete: vb. [O.E. for + lǣtan, *to leave*], *lose*, 864.

fors: sb. [O.F. force < Lat. forti-s], *matter*, 303.

forsweryng: sb. [O.E. forswerian] sing., 657; pl., 592; *perjury*.

forth: adv., *out*; telle forth, *proceed to tell*, 660.

forther over: *furthermore*, 648.

for why: *because*, 847.

forwrapped: pp., *well wrapped up*, 718.

foryeve: 3 pr. pres. subj. [O.E. forgiefan], *forgive*, 904.

free: adj. [O.E. frēo], *generous*, 401.

fro: prep. [Scand. fra = O.E. from], *from*, 506.

frutesteres: sb. [O.F. fruit < Lat. fructus + O.E. fem. suffix -estre], *female fruit-sellers*, 478.

fumositee: sb. [O.E fumosite < Lat. fumus, *smoke*], *alcoholic fumes*, 567.

fynde: v.t. and i. [O.E. findan], *to find*, 493, etc.; *to provide*, 537; pret. ind. fond, 608; foond, 846.

G.

galiones: sb. *Galens* or *gallons* (a pun), 306.

gan: v.t. [O.E. -ginnan, pret. -gan, plu. -gunnon, pp. -gunnen], pret. s. of ginnen, *to begin*, pret. plu. gonne, 323; gan is freq. an auxiliary = *did*, 287, 666.

gaude: sb. [Lat. gaudium, *joy*], *trick*, 389.

gentil: adj. [O.F. gentil < Lat. gentilis, *of a clan*], *worthy*, 304; as sb. **gentils**: *gentles, gentle folk*, 323.

giltelees: adj. [O.E. gylt + læs], *guiltless, innocent*, 491.

golet: sb. [O.F. golet < Lat. gula, *throat*], *gullet;* 543.

go(n): vb.i. [O.E. gān], pres. inf. go, 543, 749; 3 pers. sing. pres. ind. gooth, 331, 851; 3 pers. pl. pres. ind. goon, 398.

gonne: v. gan.

goode-man: sb. [< good + man], *goodman, master of the house*, 361.

goon: see go(n).

grace: sb. [O.F. grace < Lat. gratia], *grace*, 383; *favour*, 783; with sorry grace, *with ill favour*, 717; *disgracefully*, 876.

graunte: v.i. and t. 1 pr. pres. ind. [O.F. granter < creanter < L.L. credentare < L. credo], *agree*, *say yes*, 327; *consent*, *promise*, 822; pp. y-graunted, *granted*, 388.

greet: adj. [O.E. grēat], pl. grete, 472; *great*, 612; superlative, gretteste, 607.

grette: pret. [O.E. grētan, grētte], *greeted*, 714.

grisly: adj. [O.E. grȳslīc], *grisly*, *horrible*, 473, 708.

grote: sb. [properly the "great" penny; cp. Du. groot, *great*], *groat*, *fourpenny bit*, 376, 945.

gyternes: sb. [O.F. guiterne = citherne < L. cithara, *lyre* < Gk. κιθάρα + intrusive *n*, guitar being a truer form], *guitars*, 467.

H.

han: vb. [contr. of M.E. haven < O.E. habban, *to have*], pl. pres. ind. *have*, 300, 393, 587, etc.; pres. inf. *to have*, 330, etc.

harrow: interjection, 288.

hasard: sb. [O.F. hasard], *gambling*, *dicing*, 465, 591.

hasardour: sb., *a gambler*, 751.

hasardrye: sb., *gambling*, 590.

haunte(n): v.b. [O. Norman Fr. haunter], sing. pres. ind. haunteth, *indulges in*; pret. pl. haunteden, *practised*, 464.

hauteyn: adj. [O.F. < hault + ain < Lat. altus], *loud*, 330.

hawe: sb. [O.E. haga, *enclosure*], *hedge ?*, *farmyard ?*, 855.

heere: v.t. [O.E. hieran], pp. herd, 393; *hear*, 302.

heeste: sb. [O.E. hǣs < *hǣts- < hātan, *order*; the *-t* may be excrescent, but possibly represents an older pronunciation], *command*, 490.

hem: pron. [old dat. pl. of he = modern *'em*], acc. *them*, 308, 401, etc.; dat. *to them*, 435, etc.

henne: adv. [O.E. heonane], *hence*, 687.

hente: vb. [O.E. hentan < hendan < hond, *hand*], pres. inf. *seize*, 710; pp. y-hent, 868.

herte: sb. [O.E. heorte], *heart*, 290, 312, etc.

hewe: sb. [O.E. hīw], *colour*, *semblance*, *pretence*, 421.

heyre-clowt: sb., *hair-cloth*, 736.

hir: pron. [O.E. hiere, gen. sing. of hēo, *she*], *her*, 370.

hire, hir: pron. [O.E. hiera, gen. pl. of hē, hēo, hit], *their*, 291, 468.

holde: v.t. [O.E. healdan (Merc. haldan), heold, heoldon, healden], *to hold*; *keep in memory*, 438; imp. hoold, 462; pp. halde(n), *held*, *considered*, 596, 598.

honeste: adj. [O.F. honeste < Lat. honestus], *honourable*, *decent*, 328, 557.

honge: [O.E. hongan], pres. inf. *to hang*, 790.

hool: adj. [O.E. hāl], *whole*, 357.

hooly: adj. [O.E. hālig], *holy*, 340.

hoor: adj. [O.E. hār], *hoary*, 743.

hyne: sb. [formed from O.E. gen. pl. hīna < hīwa, *servant*], *hind, peasant*, 688.

J.

jalous: adj [O.F. jalous < L.L. zelosus = *full of zeal*], *jealous*, 367.

jalousie: sb., *jealousy*, 366.

japes: sb. [O.F. japper, *to bark*], *jests*, 319, 394.

Jeremye: the prophet Jeremiah, 635.

joliftee: sb. [O.F. jolivete < joli, the root of which is seen in our Yule or Christmastide], *jollity*, 780.

K.

kaityf: sb. [O.F. caitif < Lat. captivus, *a captive*], *wretch*, 728.

kan: vb. [O.E. conn = *I know*], *know, be able*; 1st pers. pres. ind. kan, *know*, 332; *am able*, 427; 2nd pers. pres. ind. kanstow [O.E. const ðu], *canst thou*, 521.

keepe: sb. [cp. late O.E. cepan = *to take hold of*], *heed*, 352, 360, 777.

kepe: vb., *keep*, 561; reflexive, kepe yow fro, *beware of*, 562; *guard*, 798.

knave: sb. [O.E. cnafa = *a boy*, cp. German knabe], *boy, servant*, 666.

L.

Lacidomye: sb., *Lacedaemonia, Sparta*, one of the Greek states, 605.

lafte: pret. ind. [O.E. lǣfan, lǣfte], *left*, 762.

lasse: adj. compar. [O.E. læssa], *less*, 865, 939; adv. compar., *less*, 602.

lat: vb. imperat. [O.E. lǣtan], *let*, 324, 368.

latoun: sb. [O.F. laton, possibly connected with our "lath"], *a kind of mixed metal, brass*, 350.

leche: sb. [O.E. lǣce], *physician*, 916.

leef: adj. [O.E. lēof], *dear*, 760; leeve = leef with the inflexional -ë added; *dear*, 731.

leere: vb. [O.E. lǣran, *to teach*, and leornian, *to learn*, were confused in M.E. so that we have often lere, *learn*, and lerne, *teach*], *learn*, 325, 578.

leeve: v. leef.

lese: vb. [O.E. lēosan, *lose*], *lose*, 611.

lesynges: sb. [O.E. lēasung, *lie*, still surviving in provincial Eng. leesings], *lies*, 591.

lete: vb. imperat. pl. [O.E. lǣtan], *leave*, 659.

letuarie: sb. [Gk. λείχειν, *lick*, Lat. electuarium, *a medicine to be licked up*], *electuary*, 307.

levere: compar. adj. [O.E. lēofra, *dearer*], *dearer*, 615.

lewed: adj. [O.E. lǣwede < L. laicus, *layman*, Gk. λαός, *people*], *lay* or *ignorant*, 392; *ignorant*, 437.

lige: adj. [O.F. lige, properly meaning *free*], *liege*, 337.

likerous: adj. [O.F. lechereux, connected with our verb *lick*], *lickerish, gluttonous*, 540.

looketh: imperat. pl. [O.E. lōcian, *look*], *search ye*, 578.

lordynges: sb. diminutive of *lord* [O.E. hlāford], *good sirs*, 329.

lough: vb. pret. of lahhe(n), *laugh* [O.E. hliehhan, hlōh, hlōgon], *laughed*, 476, 961.

lust: sb. [O.E. lust], *pleasure*; pl. lustes, *desires*, 833.

lyk: adj. [O.E. līc], *like*.

lyvestow: v. + pron. livest thou, 719.

M.

maister: sb. [O.F. maistre < L. magistrum], *master*, 301.

maken: v.t. pp. y-maked, y-maad, 382 [O.E. macian], *to make*, 368.

male: sb. [O.F. male, Fr. malle: probably Celtic; cp. Irish mala, *bag*], *travelling-bag, pack*, 920.

maner: sb. [O.F. maniere < main, *hand*, Lat. manus], *manner, kind*, 627.

mark: sb. [O.E. mearc, *die* or *stamp*], *a mark*, a coin worth 13s. 4d., 390.

mary: sb. [O.E. mearg, Icel. mergr], *marrow*, 542.

mateere: sb. [Lat. materia, O.F. matere], *matter*, 434.

may: vb. [O.E. mæg, mihte], pres. ind. sing. may, 440, 788, 816; pl. may, 325, 372, 710; pret. ind. sing. myghte, 792, 840, 846; pl. pres. subj. *mowe*, 932; *to be able*.

mesurable: [O.F. mesure < Lat. mensura, *measure*], *temperate*, 515.

mitayn, miteyn: sb. [O.F. mitaine, derivation unknown, *fingerless glove*], *a glove without fingers*, 372, 373.

mo: adj. [O.E. mā, adv.], *more*, 678.

montance: sb. [O.F. montance, Lat. mont- em, *mountain*], *amount*, 863.

mooder: sb. [O.E. mōdor], *mother*, 731; gen. moodres, 729.

moore: [O.E. māra, comp. of micel, *great*], adv. 369, *more*; adj. *greater, i.e.* those of higher rank, 939.

moot: vb. [O.E. 1 and 3 pers. s. mōt, pret. mōste], *may*, 309; *must*, 327, 725.

mowe: v. may, 932.

moyste: adj. [O.F. moiste < Lat. mustum, *fresh juice of the grape, young wine*], *new-drawn, fresh*, 315.

myrie, murye: adj. [O.E. myrig; murye represents the Southern, and myrie, 316, the Northern, forms of the word, while our form merry is Kentish. The word itself seems to be Celtic], *merry*, 316, 843.

myrthe: sb. [O.E. myrgð from myrig, above], *merry tale*, 319.
mystriste: vb. [O.E. mis + O.N. treysta, connected with O.E. trēow, *truth*], *mistrust, suspect*, 369.

N.

namely: adv., *in particular, especially*, 402, 563.
namoore: adv., *no more*, 588, 684.
nat: adv. [O.E. nawiht (= ne + awiht], *not*, 311; nat but, adv., *only*, 403.
nathelees: adv. [O.E. na + ðe + læs], *nevertheless*, 303.
ne: neg. part., *not*, 745; conj., *nor*, 383, **ne . . . ne**: *neither . . . nor*, 339.
nekke: sb. [O.E. hnecca], *neck*, 395.
neveradeel: adv., *not at all*, 670.
newe: adv. [O.E. niwe], *again, afresh*, 929.
nobles: sb., *nobles*, coins of the value of half a mark or 6s. 8d., 830, 907.
noght: adv. = nat; *not*, 417.
noght: neg. pron. [O.E. nawiht = ne + awiht], *nought*, 542.
noght but: adv., *only*, 863.
noot = ne + woot (v. wite), *do not know*, 816.
nyste = ne + wiste (q.v.), *knew not*, 487.

O.

o: num. adj. [O.E. ān], *one*, 377.
ofte tyme: adv. *oft time*, 408.
oghte: vb. [O.E. āgan, āhte], pret. subj. of owe(n), used impersonally, *it would behove*, 512.
ones: adv. [O.E. ānes], *at one, in accord*, 696.
oon: num. adj. [O.E. ān], *one*, 333.
ooth: sb. [O.E. āð], sing. 708; pl. othes, 636; *oath*.
outrely: adv. [O.E. ūtera, comp. from ūt = out + līce], *utterly*, 849.
oweth: v.i. 3 pr. pres. ind. [O.E. āgan], *owneth*, 361; pr. oghte (impersonal), *ought*, 434, behoved, 512.

P.

page: sb. [O.F. page, L.L. pagius], *page, servant*, 449, 688.
paraventure: adv. [O.F. par aventure], *peradventure*, 935.
par cas: adv. [O.F. par cas], *by chance*, 885.
par chaunce: adv. [Norm. Fr. par chaunce < L.L. cadentia, *falling out*], *by chance*, 606.
pardee: [Fr. par dieu], an expletive, *by Heaven*, 672.
parten: vb. [O.F. parter, Lat. partiri], *leave, depart*, inf. 649; **partest**, 2 pr. sing. pres. ind. *departest, gettest off*, 752.
Parthes: *Parthia*, 622.
patente: sb. [Lat. patentes (litterae), "*open*" *letters, i.e.* open to inspection on demand by authority], *patent, i.e.* official permission to quest alms as a *questiarius* or pardoner, 337.
pees: sb., *peace*, 462.
pens: sb. [contracted form of penies, M.E. plur. of peni, O.E. pening, penning, *a penny*], *pence*, 376.

peyne: vb. reflex. [O.F. peine, Lat. poena], *to trouble oneself, take pains*, 330, 395.

pitous: adj. [O.F. piteus, L.L. pietosus: "pity" and "piety" once meant the same thing], *piteous*, 302, 531.

pitously: adv. of pitous, *piteously*, 298, 529.

plat: strong adv. [O.F. plat; cp. Gk. πλατύς, *broad*], *flat*, 648.

plesaunce: sb. [Norm. Fr. plesaunce < Fr. plaire, Lat. placēre, *please*], *pleasing, currying favour*, 409.

pleye: v.i. 1 pr. sg. pres. ind., [O.E. plega, *an exercise*; plegian, *to exercise*], *play, jest*, 778; pleye, pres. inf., *play*, 827: pleyen, 3 pr. pl. pres. ind., 467; pr. part. pleyinge, 608; *play*.

pleyne: vb. [O.F. plaindre, Lat. plangere], *complain*, 512.

plight: pp. [O.E. plihtan], *pledged*, 702.

pokkes: sb. [O.E. poc, *a pustule*, possibly Celtic, cp. Irish poc, *bag*, and Eng. pocket, pouch], *pocks, scabs*, 358.

polcat: sb. [Fr. poule, *hen*], *polecat*, a kind of weasel, so-called perhaps because it is destructive to poultry, 855.

potage: sb. [Fr. potage, from pot], *soup*, 368.

pothecarie: sb. [Anglo-Norman apothecarie, L. apothecarius < Gk. ἀποθήκη, *shop*], *apothecary*, 852.

povereste: supl. adj. [O.F. povre, Lat. pauperem], *poorest*, 449.

poverte: sb. [Lat. paupertatem, O.F. poverte], *poverty*, 441.

predicacioun: [Anglo-Norman predicacioun, Lat. predicationem (preach and predicate are doublets)], *preaching*, 345, 407.

prime: sb. [O.F. prime < Lat. prima], *prime*, the first of the canonical hours, 662.

privee: adj. [O.Fr. prive, Lat. privatus], *secret*, 675.

pronounce: v. [Fr. prononcer, Lat. pronuntiare, *tell forth*], *declare, announce*, 335.

propre: adj. [O.F. propre, Lat. proprius], *handsome*, 309, *separate, i.e.* peculiar to oneself, 417.

prow: sb. [O.F. prou, cp. Eng. prow-ess, and prude], *advantage*, 300.

pryvee: sb., *privy*, 527.

putte: v.t. [O.E. potian], *put*.

Q.

quelle: v.t. [O.E. cwellan], *kill*, 854.

quod: v.t. past.ind. [O.E. cweðan, cwæð, cwǣdon, -cweden], *said*, 288, etc.

quyte: vb. [O.F. quiter, L. quietare, *to quiet*], *requite*, 420.

R.

rage: sb. [O.F. rage, L. rabiem], *passion*, 367; *frenzy*, 705.

rather: adv. [O.E. hraðor, *sooner*], *earlier*, 643.

rede: adj. [O.E. rēad], *red*, 562.
rede: vb. [O.E. rǣdan], *advise*, 941.
redily: adv. [O.E. hrædlīce], *quickly*, 667.
reed: sb. [O.E. rǣd], *advice*, 744.
rekke: vb. [O.E. reccan], *reck, care*, 405.
relikes: sb. [A.F. relikes, Lat. reliquias], *relics*, 349.
renne: vb. [O.E. rinnan], *run*, 796.
repreeve: sb. [O.F. reprover, Lat. reprobare], *reproof, shame*, 595.
reprevable: adj., *reprovable*, 632.
ribaudye: vb. [O.F. ribaudie], *ribaldry, ribald jesting*, 324.
rightwisnesse: sb. *righteousness*, 637.
rote: sb. [O.F. rote (Mod.F. route), *way, beaten track*], in the phrase by rote, *by heart*, 332.
ryve: vb. [Icel. rīfa, *tear*], *rive, stab*, 828.

S.

saffron: vb., *to colour* (as if with saffron), 345.
saugh: v. se(n).
sayn: v.t. pres. inf. [O.E. secgan], *say*, 297; 1 pers. sing. pres. ind. seye, 352; 3 pers. sing. pres. ind. seith, 492; 1 pers. sing. pret. ind. seyde, 311; *to say*.
sely: adj. [O.E. sǣlig, *happy*], *innocent*, 292.
semen: v.t. pres. inf. [O.E. sēman], *seem*, 422.
se(n): v.t. and i. [O.E. sēon, seah], pres. inf. se, 372; 3 pers. sing. pret. ind. saugh, 961; *to see*.
sepulture: sb. [Lat. sepultura], *burying*, 559.
sermone: v.i. pres. inf. [O.F. sermoner < Lat. sermonem, *speech*], *preach*, 879.
sette(n): v.t. [O.E. settan, sette, geset(t)], pres. ind. pl. sette, reflex., 775; pp. yset, 392; *to set*.
seuretee: sb., *surety, protection*, 937.
seye: v.t. [O.E. secgan], *say*, 525; pres. ind. seye, 294; pret. *seyde*, 311.
shal: vb. [O.E. sceal, pl. sculon, pret. scolde], pres. ind. sing. shal, 320, 359; pl. shul, 618, 733; pret. ind. sing. sholde, 616; pret. subj. pl. sholde, 451.
shape: vb. [O.E. sceapan, scōp], *arrange*, 813; pret. ind., shoop, *arranged, prepared*, 874.
shrewe: sb. [in O.E. only of a mouse, scrēawa, the shrew or "biting" mouse], *vicious man*, 496; *villain*, 819.
shul: [O.E. sceal, pl. sculon], *shall*, 618, 733.
sires: sb. [O.F. sire, Lat. seniorem], *sirs*, 366.
sith: conj. [O.E. sīð], *since*, 390; adv., *then*, 869.
sleen: vb. [O.E. slēan], *slay*, 491; 3 pr. sg. pres. ind., *slays*, 676; *sleeth*, pp. yslayn, 672; slayn, 703; yslawe, 856.

smerte: adv. [O.E. smearte], *smartly*, 413.

smoote: past ind. [O.E. smītan, smāt, properly = *to rub*, hence *to rub with a stick, fist*, etc.], *smote*, 677.

so: adv. [O.E. swā], *therefore*, 917.

sodeynly: adv. [O.F. sodain + ly], *suddenly*, 673.

som: indef. adj. [O.E. sum], 325; *a, some*.

sondry: adj. [O.E. syndrig], *sundry*, 443.

soor: sb. [O.E. sār], *sore*, 358.

soore: adv., *sorely*, 431.

sooth: adj. [O.E. sōþ], *true*, or possibly adv. *truly*, 636.

soothe: sb. *sooth, truth*, 370.

soothly: adv., *truly*, 758.

sory: adj. [O.E. sārig], *ill, bad*, 717, 876.

sovereyn: adj. [Lat. prep. super, *above*; O.F. soverain], *supreme, glorious*, 574.

Spaigne: *Spain*, 565.

spicerie: sb. [O.F. espice < L. species, *kind*], *spices*, 544.

stal: vb. t. [O.E. stelan, stæl, stælon, gestelen], *stole*, 610.

sterlynges: sb., *coins sterling, silver pennies*, 907.

sterve: vb. [O.E. steorfan, stearf, sturfon, -storfen, cp. Germ. sterben and Prov. Eng. "starve" = *die*], pret. plu. storven, 888; *die*, 451, 865.

stille: adv. [O.E. stille, *quietly*, hence "*without change*"], *always*, 725.

stirte: vb. [O.E. styrian, styrte, *to stir*, cp. Germ. stürzen], *start*, 705.

stonde: vb. [O E. stondan], *stand*, 391.

stones: sb. [O.E. stān], *stones*, used of glass, 347.

stoor: sb. [O.F. estor, L.L. staurum, L. in-staurare, Gk. σταυρός, *pole*], *store, live stock, property*, 365.

storven: v. sterve.

styked: pp. [O.E. stician], *stuck*, 556.

stywes: sb., *stews*, 465.

suffisant: adj. [O.F. suffisant, Lat. sufficientem], *competent*, 932.

swich: adj. [O.E. swā + līc > swelc, swilc], *such*, 383, 400, etc.

swithe: adv. [O.E. swīðe], *quickly*, 796.

swoote: adj. [O.E. swōt], *sweet*, 543.

swynke; vb. [O.E. swincan], *work hard*, 874.

synn: sb. [O.E. syn < *synd], pl. synne, 379.

T.

take(n): vb. [O.N. taka], imper. pl., 352, 360, 642; *take*.

talent: sb. [O.F. talent, Lat. talentum, Gk. τάλαντον, *balance, sum of money*: the specialised meaning being derived from the Gospel parable, St. Matt. xxv.], *desire, craving*, 540.

tassoille: vb. [O.F. assoille, Lat.

absolvo], *to assoil, to absolve*, 933.

terme: [O.F. terme, Lat. terminus], *term*; in terme, *in technical term, properly*, 311.

thanne: adv. [O.E. þænne, þonne], *then*, 326.

that: often redundant with *which*, 351, etc.

theech: = thee ich, *may I thrive*, 947, v. theen.

theen: vb. [O.E. þēon], *to thrive, prosper*, 309.

ther: conj. [O.E. ðǣr], *where*, 886.

ther-biforn: adv. [O.E. ðǣr + biforan], *thitherto*, 624.

thilke: [the + ilk = OE. ilca, *same*], *the same*, 364.

thinke(n): v.t. [O.E. ðenc(e)an, ðōhte]; pres. inf. thinke, 317; 1 pers. sing. pret. ind. thoghte, 442; *to think.*

tho: pron. [O.E. ðā, nom. pl. of se, *the* or *that*], *those*, 548.

thoghte: v. thinke(n).

thoughte, hem: v. thynken.

thurgh: prep. [O.E. ðurh], *through*, 469, 554.

thurghout: prep., *right through*, 655.

thynken: v. imp. [O.E. ðyncan, ðūhte]; 3 sing. pres. ind. thynketh, 681, 801; 3 sing. pret. ind. thoughte, 475, 771; *to seem.*

til: prep., *to*, a Northern form used to avoid the hiatus of "*to*" and "*other*," 697.

togidres: adv. [O.E. tōgædere], *together*, 702.

tombesteres: sb. [O.E. tumbian, *dance*], *female tumblers, acrobats, dancing women*, 477.

tonge: sb. [O.E. tunga], *tongue*, 356.

to-rende: vb. [O.E. to, intensive, and hrendan, *tear*], *rend asunder*, 709.

torn: sb. [O.F. torner, L. tornus, *lathe*], *turn*, 815.

to-swynke: v.i. [O.E. to, intensive, and swincan], 3 pers. sing. pres. subj., *work laboriously*, 519.

to-tere: vb. [to, intensive: O.E. teran], *tear asunder*, 474.

traytours: [O.F. traïtreux, Lat. traditorem], *traitorous*, 896.

tretee: sb. [O.F. traite < Lat. trahere, tract-]; *treaty*, 619.

trewely: adv. [O.E. getreowliee], *truly*, 301.

treye: sb. [Anglo-Norm. trei, *three*], the tray or three-spot on dice, 653.

triacle: sb. [O.F. thériaque, Lat. theriacum < Gk. *θήρ, wild beast*: hence a remedy for the wound caused by a wild beast], *a cordial*, 314.

trone: sb. [O.F. trone, Lat. thronus, Gk. *θρόνος*], *throne*, 842.

trouthe: sb. [O.E. trēowðu], *troth*, 615; pl. 702.

trowe: vb. [O.E. trēowian], *believe*, 439, 689.

tweye: num. adj. [O.E. twegue], *two*, 817.

twynne: vb. [from tweye, twy, O.E. twegen, *two*], *depart, turn away*, 430.

U.

unbokele: vb. imper. *unbuckle*, 945.

usage: sb. *custom*, *habit*, 899.

useth: vb. 3 pers. sing. pres. ind. of use(n) [Lat. utor, O.F. user], *practises*, 599.

V.

vanysshe: 1 pr. pres. ind. [cp. O.F. en-vanir, en-vanissant; L. vanescere < vanus, *empty*], *waste away*, 732.

verray: adj. [O.F. verai + Lat. verus, *true*], *very*, 480, 576.

vileynye: sb. [O.F. vileinie < L.L. villanus, *servant*]; *rudeness*, 740.

W.

wafereres: sb. [< wafer = O.F. gaufre, *a kind of waffel-cake*], *pastry-cooks*, perhaps *women pastry-cooks*, 479.

war: adj. [O.E. wær], *aware of*, *cautious*, 682.

ware: vb. [O.E. warian], *guard*, *keep*, 905.

warente: vb. [a doublet of "guarantee," O.F. warenter, from the Teutonic root seen in O.E. warian, *guard*], *safeguard*, 338.

warice: vb. [O.F. warir, warissant; Fr. guérir, from the same Teutonic root as "warente"], *cure*, 906.

wasshe: pp. [O.E. wascan], *washed*, 353.

wast: sb. [O.F. wast, Lat. vastus], *waste*, 593.

welked: adj. [O.E. wealc, *wave*: "welk" or "wilk" is the common American "wiłt," *to wither*], *shrivelled*, 738.

wene(n): vb.t. [O.E. wēnan, *ween*, *think*], 3 pers. pl. pres. ind. wenen, 349; pret. wende, 782; *imagine*, *suppose*.

whan: conj., *when*, 329, etc.

what: interr. pron., interj., and adv. [O.E. hwæt], *what*, *why*, 439, 879.

whennes: adv., *whence*, 335.

whereas: *in which*, 466.

which: [O.E. hwilc < hwȳ līc, *by what like*], has its proper meaning, "of what kind," *what* in 937.

which that: *which*, 351; *who*, 495.

whiles: conj. [O.E. adv. gen. hwīles, *for the time*], (with "the") *while*, 439.

whilom: adv. [O.E. adv. dat. pl. hwīlum, *at times*], *once upon a time*, 463.

whoso: rel. pron., *whosoever*, 385.

wight: sb. [O.E. wiht], *person*, 378.

wilfully: adv., *deliberately*, 441.

wille(n): vb. [O. E. willan, wolde]; 1 pers. sing. pres. ind. wol, 322; 3 pers. sing. pres. ind. wol, 373, 423; 1 pers. pl. pres. ind. wol, 326; 3 pers. sing. pres. subj. wole, 923; 3 pers. sing. pret. ind. wolde, 857; *will*.

wise: sb. [O.E. wīse, Fr. guise], *fashion*, *manner*, 470.

wiste: v. wite.

wit: sb. [O.E. witt], *knowledge*, 326; *wisdom, understanding*, 559.

wite, wyte: v.t. [O.E. witan, pres. 1 and 3 pers. sing. wat, 2 sing. wast, plu. witon, pret. wiste]; pres. 1 and 3 pers. sing. wot, woot, 312, 355; 2 pers. sing. woost, 810; plu. woot (786); pret. wiste, 370; pret. subj. wiste, 513; *to know*.

wol: v. wille(n).

wolle: sb. [O.E. wull or wulle, *f.*], *wool*, 448.

wombe: sb. [O.E. wamb, Goth. wamba, cp. Lowland Scotch wame], *belly*, 552.

wonne: vb. pp. of winne(n), *gained*, 389.

wood: adj. [O.E. wōd], *mad*, 287.

woodnesse: sb., *madness*, 496.

woost: v. wite.

woot: v. wite.

worm: sb. [O.E. wurm, wyrm, O.N. ormr], *snake*, 355.

wreke: sb. [O.E. wrecan], *avenge*, 857.

wroot: [O.E. wrītan, wrāt], *wrote*, 890, pret. ind. of write(n).

wydwe: sb. [O.E. widwe], *widow*, 450.

wyf: sb., pl. wyves [O.E. wīf, pl. wīf], *wife*, 369; *woman*, 910.

wyke: sb. [O.E. wice], *week*, 362.

wynne: vb. [O.E. winnan], *gain*, 403.

Y.

y-: sign of pp. = O.E. ge-, Germ. ge-, cp. y-crammed = *filled*, 348; y-stonge = *stung*, 355; y-bore = *born*, 703; yholde = held, 602; holden, 598.

yaf: v. yeven.

ycrammed: pp. [O.E. crammian, *stuff*], *stuffed, packed*, 368.

ydel, in: [O.E. īdel], *in vain*, 642.

ye: [O.E. gē], *yea*, 692.

yerne: adv. [O.E. georne], *zealously*, 398.

yeven: vb. [O.E. giefan, geaf, gēafon, ge-giefen], *give*, pres. inf. 402; pret. sing. yaf, *gave*, 490; pp. yeven, *given*, 449.

y-hent: see **hente**

yiftes: sb. [O.E. gift (rare in meaning of *gift*), *price paid for a wife*], *gifts*, 295.

ymaad: v. macian,

ymaked: v. macian.

Ynde: *India*, 722.

ynough: adv. [O.E. genōg], *enough*, 434, etc.

yow: pron. acc. and dat. pl. [O.E. ēow], *you*, 377.

ypocras: sb., *hippocras*, a wine negus, 306.

yset: pp. v. sette(n).

yshryven: pp. [O.E. scrīfan, gescrifen], *shriven, absolved*, 380.

yslawe: pp. [O.E. slēan, slōg, slōgon, geslægen], *slain*, 856.

yspoke: pp. [O.E. sp(r)ecan, gesp(r)ocen], *spoken*, 589.

yvel: adj. [O.E. yfel], *evil*, 408.

ywis: adv. [O.E. gewiss], *certainly*, 327.

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